

THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

Vol. 143

SEPTEMBER, 1954

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EPISODES OF THE MONTH

THE EDITOR

FARNBOROUGH, 1954: A PREVIEW

JAMES HAY STEVENS

THE CHANGING OWNERSHIP OF LAND

GEORGE GODWIN

PILGRIMAGE TO BAYREUTH

KENNETH ROSE

A CONSTITUTION FOR PAKISTAN

JOHN BIGGS-DAVISON

BORN TOO SOON

LORD ALTRINCHAM

AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY DENYS SMITH, ERIC
GILLETT, RICHARD BAILEY, LADY HESKETH, FRED
URQUHART, JOHN B. WOOD AND ALEC ROBERTSON

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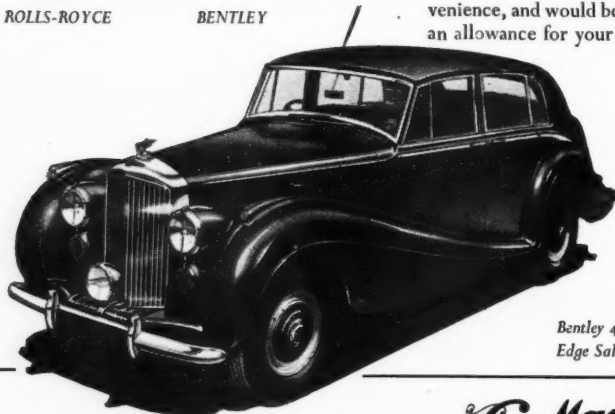


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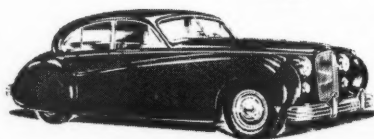
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THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

EPISODES OF THE MONTH

WHEN an outstanding personality attains political power he has the double task of doing good himself and undoing the harm which others have done. This has been the fate of M. Mendès-France, the best French Prime Minister since Clémenceau. In domestic and foreign affairs he has inherited a formidable accumulation of muddles and mistakes, and he lacks the advantage which Sir Winston Churchill had in 1940—the support of a united Coalition. At any moment he may fall, but he has already to his credit the armistice in Indo-China, the inauguration of a new policy in North Africa, and the outline of a plan for economic recovery, for the implementation of which the Assembly has voted him special powers. Whatever may happen to him in the immediate future, he has given new vitality to the Fourth Republic, and his services will not be forgotten.

E.D.C. : Nemesis of False Theory

THE latest and worst problem with which he has had to wrestle is that of the E.D.C. Treaty. For this he is in no way responsible. It is the product of a false theory, which has a curious attraction for some West European (and for most American) leaders, but is quite unrepresentative of public instinct in the larger countries of Western Europe, and quite inappropriate to the needs of an ancient and heterogeneous community.

This is the theory of federalism, which ascribes all the troubles of mankind to the existence of unfettered national sovereignty, and seeks to cure them by the creation of a Super-State. Those who are under the influence of this theory are amenable neither to the evidence of history nor to the dictates of common sense. They are fanatics, living in an unreal world of their own, but their unrealism is sometimes given the chance to affect the course of events, with most unfortunate results. Of this the E.D.C. Treaty, with its supranational clauses, is a classic example.

Control of Germany

A PART from the impulse of doctrinaire federalism, a subsidiary motive in the concoction of E.D.C. was the desire to make German rearmament innocuous. It was felt that if German forces were "integrated" into a European Army the danger of German militarism would be overcome.

The fallacy here is patent. Germany has never been controlled by "scraps of paper." The only effective controls are those which we already possess—the presence of British, American and French troops in Germany and the special sanction of atomic weapons. These, if we have the will to retain them, are effective safeguards against any revival of German armed piracy. They are quite consistent with the granting of sovereign rights to the Federal Republic and with its admission to N.A.T.O. In view of the failure of the Brussels Conference on E.D.C. it seems more than ever likely that this will be the ultimate solution.

In any event, it is of supreme importance that Britain and the United States should keep their troops in Germany for as long as can at present be foreseen. They may be there ostensibly as allied formations, rather than as occupying forces: that is a point of psychological value, but of no military significance. Provided they are there, in whatever capacity, and provided our Governments remain vigilant and have the will to act in an emergency, all will be well.

De Gasperi : A Great Democrat

A SHADOW was cast over the Brussels Conference by the news of Signor Alcide de Gasperi's sudden death. He had been living in semi-retirement, but his interest in the affairs of Italy and Europe never ceased to be passionate, and there is reason to think that his deep anxiety about the fate of E.D.C. may have caused his final collapse.

As an Italian statesman he will be remembered chiefly for his inflexible devotion to the democratic method of government. During the long period between the wars he preferred poverty and obscurity to any compromise with Fascism. After the war, when he was Prime Minister of his country in exceptionally trying circumstances, he refused either to dominate unlawfully, or be dominated by, the Communist Party. He knew how to govern, but he had a strong repugnance for the abuse of power.

Untypical Italian

IN this, it must be admitted, he was far from typical of his fellow-countrymen; and in at least one other respect his character and background were peculiar. He was without doubt a sincere Italian patriot, yet

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he had been born and brought up a subject of the Hapsburg Empire, and had actually been elected, as a young man, to the Austrian Diet. He was therefore bound by links of culture and feeling to the Germanic peoples, between whom and the Italians there is in general the most marked hostility. He was a child, or perhaps a grandchild, of the *Risorgimento*, yet he came trailing clouds of Imperial glory from his native Trento.

By special permission of the Pope, he has been buried in the famous Roman Church of St. Lawrence outside the Walls, where another great Italian, Pio Nono, is also buried. Both these two men were lovers of their country; both had, though in different ways, a supranational tendency; and both were fine examples of Roman Catholic Christianity. It is fitting that they should be commemorated in the same church.

Carolingian Dreams

IT is worth recalling that three of the main architects of E.D.C. in its federal form were naturally prone, because of religion and geography, to be inspired by the Empire of Charlemagne, which vanished so many centuries ago. De Gasperi, Schuman and Adenauer must have felt that, when E.D.C. had been followed by the establishment of a Political Community, their Carolingian dreams would have come true. But facts were too strong for them, and it has rightly been said that "facts are better than dreams."

Christian Democratic movements have been a powerful and beneficent factor in Western Europe since the war, but their leaders must be content with the pattern of national institutions and international alliances. They are doing more harm than good by seeking to create (or, as some of them would say, recreate) an organic union, for which the historical basis is extremely remote and tenuous, and the practical basis virtually non-existent.

Suez Agreement

JUST before Parliament rose the Government announced its agreement with Egypt, of which the vital provision is the evacuation of the Suez Canal Zone by British troops. A group of Conservatives opposed this agreement to the last, and they deserve much honour for their conscientious stand. They argued their case with great ability, and they were animated by the highest motives. There was no jingoism in their attitude, only a sincere conviction that the maintenance of adequate forces in the Canal Zone was a necessity to the Commonwealth and the free world.

It is to be hoped that they will not be penalized for holding to their belief in the face of strong political pressure. The services of men such as Mr. Ian Horobin and Mr. Julian Amery should not be lost to the country because of resistance to party leadership on an important issue. That captious or ignorant rebels should be left out in the cold is only to be expected; but the exclusion from office of intelligent, well-informed and high-minded critics is a perversion of Parliamentary Government.

The Right Decision

THE decision to evacuate, however, was probably right, for political as well as for strategic reasons. Our position in the Canal Zone was fast becoming untenable. Before very long we should have had to reckon with a powerful modern factor known as "world opinion," and we had anyway to deal with the Egyptians themselves, whose goodwill and co-operation were needed in the actual working of the base. So long as British troops remained on Egyptian soil, the hostility of Egypt was certain; now that the British occupation is coming to an end there is a chance that close and friendly relations may develop.

This does not mean that we were wrong to resist the clamant demands for evacuation at an earlier stage. To have given way to these before, during or just after the Sudanese elections would, for instance, have been a very bad mistake. Timing is all-important and the Government did well to take its time. Those who complain that the terms eventually obtained by us were less favourable than they might have been earlier are surely taking a rather naïve and legalistic view of the agreement. All that matters is that our garrison is being withdrawn and an attempt is being made, by us and we hope also by the Egyptians, to create harmony in the place of discord. The agreement should therefore be regarded as partly an act of convenience and partly an act of faith. Whatever its precise terms on paper, it could never have been more than that.

Not Another Abadan

SOCIALISTS have derived considerable comfort and pleasure from the Suez agreement, because they have seen in it a justification of their own policy which led to the Abadan fiasco. This is a typical example of weak reasoning or cheap political "lifemanship" (as Mr. Stephen Potter would call it).

In fact, there is no comparison between the two cases. Commercial operations are quite different from military occupations; the latter cannot possibly be camouflaged so as to satisfy national pride, but the former can be. At any time during their extravagant lustrum of power which followed the General Election of 1945, the Socialists could have taken steps to make the Anglo-Iranian establishment in Persia more palatable to the Persians. And even if they had been unable or unwilling to do that, they could, by showing greater diplomatic firmness when the crisis arose, have called Dr. Mossadek's bluff. As it was, they made the worst of both worlds. They were improvident before the event and unsure of themselves at the moment of decision. Instead of taking a straight and generous course of their own, they allowed themselves to be sidetracked into a morass of Persian demagoguery and American mediation.

It may be noted in passing that the Persian oil dispute has now been settled. Anglo-Iranian are returning, as members of a consortium, to

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the terrain from which they were excluded, and they are being compensated on a scale most gratifying to their honour and to their shareholders. But history will record that the more important capital asset of British prestige suffered an unnecessary blow as a result of Socialist incompetence.

Trouble in Cyprus

IT was to be expected that the decision to withdraw from Suez would produce repercussions in other parts of the Middle East. The most serious trouble-centre at the moment is Cyprus, where the movement for union with Greece is reaching its climax. The Government has countered by announcing that a constitution will be introduced, while at the same time reaffirming its determination to maintain British sovereignty. Meanwhile the *Enosis* (union with Greece) movement, which has for long enjoyed the full-blooded support of the Greek Church, has now received the official backing of the Greek Government, and the matter has been raised in the United Nations.

Sir Robert Armitage, the Governor of Cyprus, who was recently transferred from the Gold Coast, where he rendered sterling service as Finance Minister, has a most unenviable task. Though his summer residence is on the Cypriot Mount Olympus, he will have to be sparing in his use of thunderbolts. High-handedness has not proved very successful in Uganda, and it is likely to prove even less so in the cradle of civilization.

Bogus Argument

THE Government has not improved its position by Sir Winston Churchill's exaggerated emphasis on the hydrogen bomb in explaining his own conduct over Suez. When a subordinate Minister almost simultaneously asserted that Cyprus must remain British because of its importance to us as a strategic base, the hydrogen bomb argument came to appear, by any logical standard, utterly bogus. What is true of the base which is being abandoned in the Canal Zone must be equally true of the new base which it is proposed to establish in Cyprus. The vulnerability of this fairly small island to atomic attack cannot reasonably be doubted.

Besides, the fact that Greece is a member of N.A.T.O. makes the strategic argument for our retaining Cyprus all the more questionable.

Hint of Hypocrisy

ANOTHER ill-chosen argument (if it can be dignified by the term) is that sovereignty as such cannot be challenged. Sir Pierson Dixon, British delegate to the United Nations, used the following words, which

must have caused much amusement to those familiar with British history. "Cyprus," he said, "is of course entirely within the domestic jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, and thus a territory in whose affairs the United Nations cannot intervene."

The same claim could have been put forward by the Ottoman Empire during the last century, when it was fighting a losing battle against insurgent nationalism. Though our worst detractors could hardly suggest that we had "desolated and profaned" the island of Cyprus, Mr. Gladstone's "bag and baggage" speech could have been quoted with effect against Sir Pierson Dixon. Arabs might also be tempted to remind Sir Winston Churchill of the encouragement which he gave to Zionism, and the French might observe that British statesmen are less careful of the principle of sovereignty when it concerns the rights of other nations, than when it concerns their own. The phrase *Perfide Albion* owes its existence to the incurable British fondness for being righteous at the expense of others, and for inflicting solemn reprobation upon those who attempt to be righteous at our expense. We are not, as a rule, perfidious, but we are very apt to be hypocritical.

Should we be Intractable?

MORALLY, our strongest argument for not giving way over Cyprus would be (or, rather, would have been) that we were reluctant to jeopardize the rights of a large minority, for whose well-being we were responsible. It is, however, impossible even to mention this argument in the light of what has happened in the Sudan. Nor is the contention, fair as it is, that the Cypriots would suffer economically from their union with Greece, likely to help us much in the present controversy. Only a pure Marxist (and the number of pure Marxists is dwindling fast) can now feel satisfied with a case which assumes the supremacy of the economic motive.

Are we right, therefore, to be so intractable on this issue? It may be that the introduction of a new political system will cause many Cypriots to have second thoughts about *Enosis*. Perhaps the agitation is superficial. Perhaps the Government's attitude, however clumsily stated, is in its elements sound. The balance of probabilities would seem to lie distinctly in the opposite sense.

Principle of Consent

FROM this difficult question a much larger and more important question emerges, which we must not allow to be obscured by any transient considerations of expediency. Is membership of the Commonwealth to be based at any point upon coercion, or is it to be founded exclusively upon consent?

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The answer is obvious to those who have perceived the boundless promise of our unique experiment. There can be no return to the fumbling benevolent despotism of "Mr. Mothercountry." The individual sovereignty of full Member-States is a vital feature of the Commonwealth, and the authority of Westminster and Whitehall must steadily diminish, until it is strictly confined to the territory and people of the United Kingdom. In the bright future which gleams before us the Queen can have no subjects who are not willing subjects, the Commonwealth no members who are not proud and happy to belong.

Royal Travellers

THE Duke of Edinburgh has recently returned from a visit to Canada which was in striking contrast to the traditional Royal "tour". He covered immense distances and received useful information rather than addresses of welcome. This comparative freedom from formality is well suited to his character and to the national character of Canada.

The Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra are now following him, though not exactly in his footsteps. It is to be hoped that their visit to Canada will be marked by the same naturalness as his; it will be no fault of theirs if it is not.

At Vancouver Prince Philip witnessed the most exciting event of the British Empire Games, the "Mile of the Century" in which Bannister beat Landy, both runners having a time of less than 4 minutes (though not less than Landy's record-breaking time in Finland).

Labour Leaders on the Move

MR. ATTLEE, Mr. Bevan and other leaders of the Labour Party have been visiting Russia and China. Their journey could hardly have failed to arouse considerable interest and controversy, but rather surprisingly opposition to it has not been confined to Americans and British Conservatives of the *Punch* school of statesmanship. It has been censured by at least one important Socialist, Mr. Hector McNeil, who was Minister of State at the Foreign Office in the Labour Administration. He objected in the first place to acceptance of the Chinese invitation on the ground that it might prejudice the outcome of the Geneva Conference. And he has since maintained his disapproval for the more general reason that the Anglo-American alliance may be weakened by the visits.

Intelligent Observers

NO doubt it is true that most Americans are somewhat outraged by the spectacle of British politicians hobnobbing with men whom

they regard, quite rightly, as enemies of freedom. But even in America there are welcome signs of a more tolerant and sensible attitude. The *New York Herald-Tribune* reproduced from the *Milwaukee Journal* an article entitled "No Wool over Attlee's Eyes," in which it was suggested that even though Mr. Bevan might be taken in by the Communists, Mr. Attlee would remain the captain of his soul. "Clement Attlee may be quiet and drab, but he hates tyranny, loves freedom, knows what the world score is, and keeps his eyes open."

In fact the same might be said, with slight variations, of all the other delegates. It is most unlikely that they will have been taken in; on the contrary, they may have noticed much more than their hosts ever intended them to notice.

Advantages of Semi-Official Contact

DIPLOMATICALLY, the visits may have distinct value, because Mr. Attlee as Leader of the Opposition, and indeed Mr. Bevan and Dr. Edith Summerskill as Privy Councillors, have a semi-official status. They are not responsible for Government policy; they cannot speak for the Government, and they would not wish to do so. But they can speak, and be spoken to, as representatives of Britain, whose words will not be disregarded, in public or in private, when they return home.

It is therefore possible that vague overtures may have been made to them, and tentative ideas put forward, for which no more convenient mode of expression or transmission could at the moment have been found. Sir Winston Churchill's desire for an official meeting at the highest level has yet to be fulfilled. Meanwhile the Labour leaders' visits may have served a useful and comparable purpose.

President Vargas

ON August 24 Dr. Getulio Vargas, President of Brazil and dominant figure in that country for about a quarter of a century, committed suicide rather than give up office. The immediate causes of this sudden drama (of a type often seen in Latin America) are still somewhat obscure, but the President's reputation will probably benefit from the moment and manner of his death. His country is in serious economic difficulties, which the Government has been unable to master, but Vargas has left a letter in which he fixes the blame for these upon "international groups" and "the forces and interests that are against the people". He had never been much loved by the rich, and he appears to have died through having lost the support of the Armed Forces; but from the grave he has made a shrewd appeal to the Brazilian masses, who had been the source of his strength.

Dictator of the Saner Sort

BETWEEN 1930 and 1945 he exercised dictatorial power in Brazil, but his methods were more akin to those of Dr. Salazar in Portugal than to those of Mussolini or Hitler. He was not given to ostentatious show. His main achievements were the strengthening of Federal power against the fissiparous tendencies of the States, the expansion of Brazilian industry, and the improvement of conditions for the workers. He showed his understanding of world values by coming into the war very early by Latin American (or indeed by American) standards. In an age of despots, most of whom have been disastrous malefactors, Vargas must be regarded as a dictator of the saner sort.

Government Changes

AT the end of July a few Government changes were announced, consequent upon the resignations of Mr. Oliver Lyttelton (for personal reasons) and Sir Thomas Dugdale (for political reasons).

The new Colonial Secretary is Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd, who has a major piece of legislation to his credit as Minister of Transport and whose main interest has always been in Commonwealth affairs. He is following a very distinguished and courageous holder of the Colonial Office, from whom he has inherited a number of extremely difficult problems. Mr. Lyttelton will long be remembered for his firmness in the face of criticism and misunderstanding; he fully deserved the viscountcy which the Queen has conferred upon him, and the warm letter of praise which the Prime Minister wrote him when accepting his resignation. But his successor has a most exacting task, and he will need to show great sympathy and imagination, as well as the power of decision.

Youngest Minister

OTHER appointments were Mr. D. Heathcoat-Amory (Minister of Agriculture), Mr. John Boyd-Carpenter (Minister of Transport), Brigadier A. R. W. Low (Minister of State, Board of Trade), Mr. Henry Brooke (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), and Sir Edward Boyle (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Supply).

The latter must have been of special interest to readers of this Review, because Sir Edward has been an Assistant Editor and a very frequent contributor. At thirty, he is now the youngest member of the Government, and he has attained office for the first time a year younger than Sir Winston Churchill himself, who was thirty-one when he became Under-Secretary for the Colonies in 1906. It is notoriously risky to forecast the future of individuals in politics, but those who know Sir Edward Boyle

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are well aware that he is fit to influence the destinies of the Conservative Party, and perhaps to lead it; and they are overjoyed that his early promotion is giving him the opportunity to prove himself in office.

Is Churchill about to Retire?

SPECULATION is steadily mounting, not so much on the question whether or not the Prime Minister will retire (because it is now generally assumed that he will do so some time before the next Election), but on the exact date of his retirement. There is a strong likelihood that the Election will be next year, so that Sir Winston's resignation cannot be too long delayed, if his successor is to have a chance to settle himself in the saddle before plunging into the electoral fray.

Some people are convinced that the announcement will come before Parliament reassembles. Others suggest that Sir Winston will wait until his eightieth birthday, and then withdraw from national leadership, in an atmosphere supercharged with emotion and goodwill. Others still are confident that he will retain the Premiership until well into the New Year.

One thing is certain: his departure will create a vacuum which no one now living can ever hope to see filled.

His Future as a Parliamentarian

THIS vacuum will only be partial so long as he is alive; and it is to be hoped that he will remain in public life to the extent of making great speeches from time to time in different parts of the world, and also in Parliament.

His continued membership of Parliament presents a problem, however, because it will be difficult for him to serve as a mere Minister, having wielded supreme power, and if he is not in the Government he will presumably have to sit on the back benches, or "below the Gangway", in the House of Commons. This would be most unfitting, and the right solution is surely that he should become a member of "another place". His historical fame as Winston Churchill, the Great Commoner of this age, would not be tarnished by acceptance of a peerage. On the contrary, this would give a final romantic lustre to a career which has been illumined throughout its course with the light of history.

N.B.—We regret that, owing to a printer's error, the pages of our August issue were incorrectly numbered. Whereas the numbering should have been 65–128, it appeared as 129–192. Clearly it is impossible to go back to the missing numbers. The current issue therefore begins at page 193.

EDITOR.

FARNBOROUGH, 1954: A PREVIEW

By JAMES HAY STEVENS

THE annual Display and Exhibition of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors was a comparatively minor aeronautical event in the indolent 'thirties, but since the war it has become the climactic moment of the year's technical endeavour. The first post-war show was held at Radlett and this continued until, in 1948, there came a rumour that "Radlett will be held at Farnborough next year"—and Farnborough it has been ever since, both in place and name.

The move was made partly because the Handley Page aerodrome at Radlett was becoming too small for the expanding industry and, not least, because of the ever-lengthening take-off and landing runs of the jet aeroplanes. Thus it is that the annual display of Britain's aircraft industry takes place in the very cradle of British aviation. The Royal Aircraft Establishment, whose aerodrome it is, was the original Government Royal Aircraft Factory of 1912, and among the buildings to-day can be seen the old airship sheds and the hangars of No. 1 Balloon Company, Royal Engineers, which became No. 1 Squadron of the R.F.C. Preserved inside a white paling is "Cody's Tree," a decrepit stump to which that pioneer is reputed to have tethered his box-kite aeroplane when the wind was high. The vast main runway, some two miles in length, disappears across the barren sands of Laffan's Plain whose skies must be vibrant with the ghosts of fragile wings and the splutter of rotary engines.

But the S.B.A.C. Display is a practical, business-like affair, and it forms

the very shop-window for our aeronautical wares. It is the annual meeting place for many thousands of technicians and business-men. It is the flying which attracts, with the Static Exhibition's tent full of detailed items and, afar off, the company caravans, where friends meet and the deals are done. This year there will be over one hundred caravans and the floor area of the exhibition tent will be 110,000 square feet.

In 1953 the value of British aviation exports rose to £65,000,000 from £34,000,000 in 1949, and the industry has no doubt that this was, in large measure, due to the annual publicity of the S.B.A.C. Display and the way that it attracts customers, and their technical advisers, from all over the globe.

Very often in the past the combination of trying to complete prototypes on the eve of the show, and the strict security regulation that new military types are unmentionable until they have flown, has resulted in a species of guessing game. This year, however, all the "possibles" had flown and had therefore been unveiled by the middle of August. Thereafter, it was simply a matter of seeing whether the English summer would allow them to do the ten hours' flying without which no aeroplane is eligible to be exhibited in flight. The security authorities sometimes play rather puckish tricks in the exercise of their duty and one is never sure until the opening day whether a familiar type may not be suddenly roped off or a new one refused permission to land.

Probably the best way to deal with

the new aeroplanes expected is to take them alphabetically, which, although it does not build up to a climax, does at least avoid bathos.

Auster Aircraft has been making small high-wing monoplanes since before the war and is to-day the solitary supplier in the light aeroplane market, where once Britain reigned supreme. This year the company will be showing a new liaison aeroplane for the Army, the Auster AOP9.* This is in general appearance not unlike the wartime Army Austers and the civil club aeroplanes, but it is, in fact, a heavier and more powerful aeroplane. The structure is more robust and the 180 h.p. of a Blackburn Cirrus Bombardier engine lifts a gross weight of 2,100 lb. in a matter of 110 yards. For artillery spotting, speed is of little importance, so that a maximum of only 127 m.p.h. is no handicap—the criterion is to be able to operate from small rough fields.

The de Havilland Aircraft Company hopes to fly the lengthened Comet 3 transatlantic airliner and the shorter range Comet 2, which has not been shown before. Overshadowed by the anticipated results of investigations, and the findings of the inquiry, the Comets can be flown with confidence under the conditions of the display. The Comet 3, which has four Rolls-Royce Avon RA26 turbojets of 40,000 lb. total thrust has a much longer fuselage than the two earlier types, enabling it to carry 58 to 76 passengers. The cruising speed will be 500 m.p.h. at 40,000 feet, with a stage length (including allowances for head winds, diversion and "queueing" to land) of 2,600 miles. The Comet was a magnificent pioneering achievement and the tragedies that have attended it are, one feels, too harsh a punishment for the errors made when venturing into the unknown. It is, as always, so easy to be wise afterwards

* AOP means air observation post.

and say that this or that was sufficiently common engineering or aerodynamic knowledge to have been foreseen.

De Havilland will again show the D.H.110 naval fighter with two Avons, the six-seater Beaver "bush" aeroplane, which has been demonstrated to the Army and in Germany, and the Vampire Trainer as used by the R.A.F. and which is being offered to N.A.T.O.

The English Electric Company has the most exciting aeroplane to show, the P-1 supersonic interceptor fighter. The Minister of Supply foreshadowed this aircraft when he said that an order for twenty had been placed to accelerate development flying. The P-1 was also foreshadowed by the Short SB-5 experimental monoplane which has wings with adjustable sweep and a tail-plane that can be mounted either at the bottom of the fuselage or on top of the fin. For the whole of this year, the SB-5 has been doing low-speed trials with its wing set at 60 degrees sweep-back and its tail low down. A curious feature of the SB-5 is that the ailerons are set across the wing tips, not along the trailing edge. This arrangement should make them particularly efficient at very high speeds, when the conventional controls tend to distort the wing instead of rolling the aeroplane—so causing "control reversal."

The P-1 is not a handsome aeroplane, with its long, slab-sided, parallel fuselage containing two Armstrong Siddeley Sapphires of undisclosed power, but supersonic aerodynamics demand long, thin bodies, with few or no curves, and this shape may presage those of the future.

English Electric will also demonstrate the latest version of the very successful Canberra, the B Mark 8 intruder. This has a single-seat raised cockpit on the port side of the fuselage in order to improve the forward view for making ground attacks in the dark. An "in-

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THE ENGLISH ELECTRIC P-1

truder," it perhaps should be explained, has to interfere with enemy aerodromes and communications by bombing and shooting them up at night; in particular, it is charged with attacking home-coming enemy bombers.

Fairey Aviation has a very interesting helicopter flying now, the Gyrodyne; but unfortunately this is unlikely to be demonstrated, due to some modifications. The Gyrodyne takes off and hovers like a helicopter, with a jet drive from the tips of the rotor blades, and flies forward like an autogiro, with the rotor windmilling and power delivered to airscrews for traction. The Gyrodyne is a model for the projected Rotodyne 40-seater inter-city helicopter.

Folland Aircraft's Midge is another highlight of the display. This aeroplane, designed by Mr. W. E. W. Petter, who was responsible for conceiving the Canberra, has been built as a private venture to try to convince the

authorities, both here and abroad, that an efficient jet fighter can be made for £25,000—a quarter of the current price. What Mr. Petter has designed is a "jet Spitfire," with a span of barely 21 feet, a weight of 6,000 lb., but with two 30-mm. cannon, radio, and fuel for over an hour. The Midge, because no other engine is available, has a turbojet of only 1,640 lb. thrust, which gives it a speed of over 600 m.p.h. As the Gnat, fully-equipped fighter, the same airframe will have a 5,000-lb. thrust Bristol Orpheus, which will raise the speed into the 750-m.p.h. class.

The Gnat/Midge is not just another aeroplane, it is the fulfilment of an idea, the application of the principle of "designing light"—an attempt to reverse the steepening complication/weight/cost spiral followed by fighters since the war. Like most revolutionary ideas, the Gnat has been ignored by authority, so Mr. Petter is building at



THE FAIREY JET GYRODYNE

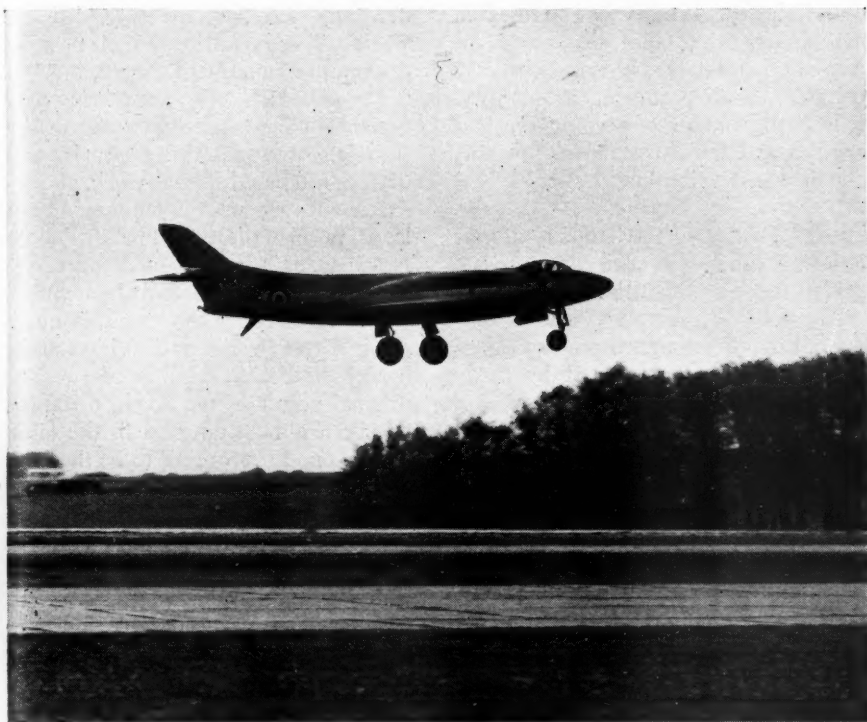
Follands' expense two Midge and a Gnat to prove his faith. A tender has been made offering the Gnat for a N.A.T.O. light ground-attack fighter competition, but the result is still awaited at the time of writing.

Hunting Percival will show an unusual aeroplane, a piston-engined trainer adapted to take a turbojet. This, the Jet Provost, is a rather dumpy, rugged-looking machine. The radial engine has been removed from the nose of a standard R.A.F. Provost trainer, a retractable tricycle undercarriage fitted in place of a fixed tail-wheel one, and an Armstrong Siddeley Viper mounted in the fuselage, with intakes on each side of the cockpit and a jet pipe in the tail. A number of Jet Provosts has been ordered by the R.A.F. for trials of the principle of all-jet training.

Scottish Aviation, which has achieved considerable success in the Malayan jungle with its Prestwick Pioneer slow-flying liaison monoplane, hopes to show a twin-engined feeder route airliner, the Twin Pioneer. This is a high-wing monoplane, with a fixed undercarriage and two 550 h.p. Alvis Leonides radial engines. It is intended to carry ten passengers and freight and to be able to fly in and out of small (300 yards) grass air strips. The design has the financial backing of the Ministry of Supply and the moral support of the Colonial Office.

Short Brothers and Harland will be demonstrating the now familiar Seamew slow-flying, convoy-protection, anti-submarine monoplane and the SB-5, already mentioned. The Short Sherpa will also be flown. This is a curiously graceful tailless aeroplane that belies

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THE SUPERMARINE 525

by its simplicity its originality and its technical significance. Its designer, Mr. David Keith-Lucas, has evolved a wing, which he calls "aero-isoclinic," so designed that when it bends under load it distorts favourably. It is a species of aerodynamic-cum-structural judo which allows the designer to reduce weight while maintaining strength, because, instead of using many pounds of material to make the wing stiff, he builds into it instead controlled flexibility. Mr. Keith-Lucas claims that the aero-isoclinic wing is the only way to combine the aerodynamic characteristics necessary for long range at high altitude (large span) with the structural strength for very high speed low down. The Sherpa is, incidentally, only a flying model to test the theory and is not itself a fast aeroplane, having

only two tiny turbojets of 350 lb. thrust each.

The Supermarine 525 is a graceful swept-wing fighter, big brother to the R.A.F. Swift, with two Avons in its sleek fuselage. It is a development of the Type 508, which had straight wings, and is officially said to presage a new fighter already ordered for the Royal Navy. The Type 525 suffers the limitations imposed by carrier operation, that is to say, restricted dimensions and the weight of folding wings and arrestor hook, but it is a powerful aeroplane and should, if it comes into service in a reasonable period of years, give the Navy a modern fighter at last.

These are the new aeroplanes expected to be at this year's display, but, interesting as they are, they represent only a fraction of the effort of the air-

craft industry. Prototypes and research aeroplanes, while difficult enough to make in themselves, are simple and easy compared with producing in quantity. It is in the making of aeroplanes, their engines and their accessories for sale, and in the distribution of them across the world, that an industry justifies itself. This year the British aircraft industry can point with pride to its achievements in this field.

The Vickers-Armstrongs Viscount, product of that dry-tongued genius George Edwards, has been ordered by many airlines, and no less than forty are being bought by America. This is the culmination of years of hard work and battling in the face of criticism, not only by the makers but by Rolls-Royce, who designed its Dart turboprops.

The Hawker Hunter, ordered in large quantities for N.A.T.O., and the Supermarine Swift fighters are now coming rapidly off the production lines—albeit rather delayed. The Vickers Valiants, first of the V bombers, are also appearing and there will be one squadron by the end of the year—to be followed before long by the Avro Vulcan delta and the crescent-wing Handley Page Victor. Despite the Comet set-back, these aeroplanes are now being built again and a substantial number should be delivered next year. The Bristol Britannia transatlantic turboprop airliner has started to come from the factory, and B.O.A.C. anticipates receiving four by the end of the year for route-proving trials. This aeroplane, too, has had its vicissitudes, but most engineers and operators agree that it is an intrinsically excellent design.

The British aero-engine companies suffer much more from security restrictions than do the airframe manufacturers, and they are hard put to it to give earnest of their successes upon the stands. Since the initial achievements of Sir Frank Whittle, British turbine

designers have, quite truly, led the world. To-day, although their position does not remain unchallenged, they are still well ahead. The Americans have bought numerous licences for British turbojets and several of their new designs are based on our work.

Rolls-Royce provides power for a large proportion of the R.A.F., the N.A.T.O. air forces—and even the U.S.A.F., the U.S.N. and the U.S.S.R. by proxy.* The Avon, made in quantity in Great Britain, is also built under licence in France and Sweden. The original power of the Avon, 6,500 lb., has been almost doubled in the latest versions and it promises to be the most widely-used turbojet in the world, being fitted to fighters, bombers and airliners. Rolls-Royce has also built the Conway by-pass engine, a variant of the turbojet, originally suggested by Whittle which will give considerable fuel economy for long range. Alas, Security will not permit the Conway to be shown. Rolls-Royce also has a new turboprop, the RB109, of high power and low fuel consumption, which may be unveiled on September 7. A small, lightweight turbojet, the Soar, of under 2,000 lb. thrust will be unveiled.

The Bristol Aeroplane Company may be allowed to give more details of the "two-spool" Olympus turbojet that holds the world's altitude record of 63,000 feet, and the company is likely to give some particulars of its new turboprop, the BE25. This is a "constant-power" engine, which means that it has a capacity capable of delivering, say, 8,000 h.p. at sea level, a power that nobody needs, and so it is throttled to give only 4,000 h.p. So, instead of starting to lose power as soon as the

* Rolls-Royce Nene and Tay turbojets are built under licence in America, while through the insistence of the late Stafford Cripps the Derwent and Nene were given to the Russians, who developed the latter for the MiG-15.

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THE BRISTOL BRITANNIA AIR LINER

aeroplane starts to climb, the engine will deliver 4,000 h.p. all the way up to its critical altitude (probably 20,000 feet) and only then will it start to fall off. This type of engine is expected to give high cruising speeds at 25,000 to 35,000 feet and also to overcome the take-off power limitations of the turboprop at elevated tropical aerodromes.

Napier is able to show three entirely different power units, two of them unique. The Eland is a conventional 3,000 h.p. turboprop due to be developed for the Fairey Rotodyne. The Nomad is a "compound diesel," as originally proposed by Sir Harry Ricardo, and combines a two-stroke diesel piston engine with a turbo-compressor to achieve an exceptionally low fuel consumption for its 3,250 h.p. The Oryx is a 750 gas horsepower "generator," a turbine/compressor unit

delivering a "working fluid," i.e. hot compressed air and burnt gases for use either as a jet drive or to turn a turbine—in fact it is a "boiler."

The Armstrong Siddeley company is hoping to show its most powerful Sapphire turbojet, the AS7, and possibly a new rocket motor. The de Havilland engine company will not be permitted to reveal its Gyron high power, simple axial for fighters, but may be able to show its latest rocket motor.

In addition to the aeroplane and engine company's new exhibits there should be many interesting novelties on the stands of accessory manufacturers. Judging from past performance, one would recommend inspection of the Ministry of Supply exhibit, which is always both novel and informative.

JAMES HAY STEVENS.

THE CHANGING OWNERSHIP OF LAND

By GEORGE GODWIN

IN an age so preoccupied with research it is curious that among all the statistical material that issues from H.M. Stationery Office and elsewhere, one can find no statistical survey of the land ownership of the British Isles. There is none.

This is not to say that no attempts at a survey of this kind have been made : there have been three. William I made the first of them when he sent his Justiciaries round the realm to ascertain ownership and assess values in terms of service. The compilation of the Domesday Book was a remarkable achievement, but it was neither scientific nor complete, since it omitted four northern counties.

The second attempt, sometimes referred to as Derby's Domesday, was made in 1873 as the result of a motion in the House of Lords by the Earl of Derby of that day. The object of that survey was to ascertain the number of landowners, including householders, in the United Kingdom and the extent of their holdings. This survey was concerned only with freeholds and leases of more than ninety-nine years. Though the survey of 1873 was a valuable contribution to knowledge, it did not yield a true picture, for it took no cognizance of non-rateable land, certain categories of mines and of woodlands. The survey was compiled county by county and this resulted in overlapping.

For example, the Duke of Devonshire is shown as owner of an estate in Derbyshire (89,462 acres). The balance of his land holdings, distributed over

thirteen counties, appear in the statistical analysis as so many separate ownerships. Thus the great estates of the twenty-seven Dukes appeared as the properties of one hundred and fifty-two landlords.

The final figures were as follows : Owners of one acre or more, 269,547 ; owners of some fraction of an acre, 703,289. Among the greatest of the landed estates at that time were some which in any other realm would rank as principalities ; but their true extent was not apparent in the 1873 Derby Domesday returns, which were vitiated somewhat by defective statistical methods.

The third attempt to survey the realm's land ownership was made in 1909-1910 under the Finance Act during the Chancellorship of Mr. Lloyd George. The purpose then was to secure land valuations for the assessment of Land Values Taxation. The methods then employed were no better, if, indeed as good, as those used in the 1873 survey ; and in 1922 the Land Valuation Department was closed down and its records destroyed.

Historical and political processes determine land ownership. For example, before the Black Death in the 14th century, land became scarce ; for the population had increased rapidly and there were many searching for food-bearing land. The lord of the manor was then cock of the walk. But the plague made labour scarce, and the villein with a little saved soon emerged as the tenant farmer.

The landowner, since the days of

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Chancellor Morton and before, has always been an easy target for the Exchequer; a sitting bird for the Chancellor. Morton, that wily raiser of revenue for his royal master, reasoned sweetly: "You live so frugally, you must have saved much"—or, the other prong of this uncomfortable fork: "How magnificently you live! You must be exceedingly rich."

Again, at the time of Marlborough's campaigns, the money to pay for them was raised by heavy land taxes. These frequently had the same effect as Death Duties in our own day—the disintegration of landed estates to satisfy onerous tax demands.

Fifty years ago it was estimated that about one half of the total land area of the British Isles was owned by 2,500 landowners. Included were, among others, such great estates as those of the Dukes of Norfolk, Westminster, Devonshire, Sutherland, Atholl, Buccleuch, Argyll and Montrose.

Some of the great historical estates have so far stood firm, thanks to lawyer-devised defence works, against the battering-ram assaults of the Exchequer. But Income and Surtax and Death Duties at their present levels would make inevitable the ultimate disintegration of all great landed properties. At the time of writing one of the most famous, that of the Duke of Devonshire, is in process of diminution.

In 1873, this estate, spread over fourteen counties, totalled 198,665 acres, with a gross annual rental of £180,990, exclusive of the value of mines and shooting. On the death of the late, the tenth, Duke, the estate was valued for probate at about £3,000,000. Upon that the eleventh Duke will have to find £2,400,000, or more than two-thirds, for Death Duties. To meet this levy the fine Applegarth and Halleath estates were this summer put upon the market. This fine Dumfries-shire estate

includes 7,000 acres, thirty farms, and is valued at £250,000. A mere drop in the ocean—a mere tenth of the Duty—and so a further 7,700 acres of the Derbyshire estate is also to be sold.

Much the same process is now in operation following the recent death of the Duke of Bedford. The Bedford estate, which includes Woburn and Great Maytham, in Kent, and much valuable urban property in London, was one of those that until the present time had remained more or less intact. It totalled 87,507 acres with a gross annual rental of £141,577. At the time of writing the Great Maytham estate is passing into the hands of many of the former tenant farmers.

It is probably true to say that the only great estates that can survive to-day are those which are nourished by great industrial fortunes, of which that of the late Lord Cowdray is an example. But even there sales were necessary to meet Death Duties, and although a fine Sussex estate remains intact, 40,000 acres of Scottish land had to be sold.

Nothing better illustrates the present trend than what has befallen the Dukes of Sutherland. In 1873, the Sutherland estates might have been more properly described as a realm, for the Duke owned no less than 1,353,546 acres, with a gross annual rental of £441,679. To-day, there remain to the present Duke 350,000 acres.

Not all revenue derived from Death Duties is derived from land, though much of it is. There are great fortunes which are represented by industrial interests and from these, also, the State takes toll. That of the late Sir George Wills paid £4,000,000; Lord Gretton's, £6,760,000, Lord Hambleden's, £1,000,000, James Oxley's, £2,774,541. All these fortunes came of industrial empires.

Naturally, men of wealth, landed or otherwise, have taken thought how,

within the law, they might preserve their wealth for their heirs. For example, the late David Yule, a fabulously wealthy Indian merchant, claimed Indian domicile. Sir Robert Houston claimed Jersey domicile and successfully fought the Inland Revenue. When, ultimately, his widow made a contribution that ran into seven figures it was an act of grace and one that owed something, perhaps, to the persuasive charm of Sir Winston Churchill.

When the advisers of Lord Fitzwilliam sought a way out by clever devices, all seemed well, but as the event proved, appearances were deceptive. In consideration of the payment of shares and life assurances, Lord Fitzwilliam secured for himself a life annuity. But on his death nine years later the Crown claimed Death Duties on the value of the property thus surrendered in exchange for a fixed income. The Inland Revenue lost their case; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day, Sir Stafford Cripps, thereupon introduced legislation making such devices illegal.

At the present time the only effective method of Death Duty evasion is the gift made *inter vivos* a full five years before death.

Death Duties provide an interesting example of how, without change of legal form, a land tenure can be divested of its original character. For example, a fee simple or freehold, is ownership extending beyond the lifetime of the owner, in perpetuity, and subject only to the theoretical overlordship of the Crown.

Thus, before high taxation and Death Duties made it generally impossible, an estate could be handed down from generation to generation, and often was. In this way estates were held in families for centuries. The small Ashton Court Estate is an interesting example of this continuity of land ownership. This

property, one of 2,250 acres, had been held by the Smyth family for over four hundred years—since 1543. It was broken up a few years ago to meet Death Duties.

There are many small estates like that throughout the country and they have generally been owned by people who regard the land as a trust, and the maintenance of soil fertility as a first duty. They are people who farm, not as a means to a livelihood only, but as a way of life.

Can a man buying a freehold of this character to-day regard himself as possessing a property which he can pass on in due course to his heirs? Generally, he cannot. A freehold, therefore, has become little more than a life estate, though theoretically unchanged. What at best an heir may hope for is some truncated part of his patrimony. Even the 45 per cent. concession for farmed land may still involve the heir in forced sales.

Complex and delicate economies are tampered with when agricultural units that have grown into organisms are mutilated; for a good farm is usually a balanced economic land unit, and if some part of it has to be sold to meet the demands of the Treasury on the death of the owner, it can only be to the detriment of the land. Well managed land is a continuing source of wealth, and any tax system that interferes with good farmland is a bad system. For land converted into money for the State is used for revenue purposes: it is national income. It may be wisely employed; or it may be squandered on some mammoth folly such as a ground-nuts scheme.

The concession granted to the owner of agricultural land in the matter of Death Duties has had the unforeseen consequence of bringing into being a new category of farmer. This is the man who derives his income from a pro-

THE CHANGING OWNERSHIP OF LAND

fession, trade or industry, and who buys a farm, not to adopt that traditional way of life, but as a device to circumvent the full liability of his estate for Death Duties or to reduce his liability for Income and Surtax.

Some fine farms are passing into the hands of this new-style farmer, and it is fairly certain that he will become a familiar figure in the near future. He may be described, not unfairly, as one who plays with an industry of national importance as a means of tax evasion. But motive is immaterial; proper use of the land paramount. Time here must be the test. Though capital alone cannot create good farms, good farms cannot exist without capital.

The greatest landlord in Britain to-day is the State, through the State-sponsored departments, organizations and institutions. No less than five million acres of land are under direct Government ownership and control; that is, 11 per cent. of our total land area. It is a percentage that seems likely to increase in the immediate future.

The largest State enterprise involving land ownership is the Forestry Commission. It has 1,909,400 acres. The next largest departmental landowner is the Coal Board, which manages a million acres. Crown lands, which comprise for the most part lands surrendered by the Crown in exchange for a fixed Civil List, amount to 250,000 acres, a considerable part being valuable urban property. In addition, the Crown Lands include some fifty magnificent country estates.

The next largest landowner is the Established Church, through the Church Commissioners. This body controls 330,000 acres, and has an income of some £7,000,000 a year. Between them, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge possess about the same acreage of freehold land as the Established Church.

Local authorities manage rather more than half a million acres; the National Trust a further 140,000, mostly either natural preserves or parklands or great historical houses and estates surrendered by their former owners on terms. The great insurance companies come next, headed by the mammoth Prudential. Between them the insurance companies own land to the value of many millions. The figures in acreage are not available, but they own some of the finest agricultural and urban property in the Kingdom.

Here, then, we have an interesting phenomenon, that while the breaking up of the great landed estates in private ownership proceeds, a contrary trend is bringing more and more land into the ownership of the great limited companies. To this extent farming is ceasing to be a way of life, as it has been for centuries, and is becoming a business like any other. Time alone will show the wisdom or otherwise of this.

There remain the relatively small parcels of agricultural land. The majority of small and moderate farms are worked by tenant farmers, but as farms come increasingly on the market with the forced sales of the large estates in response to Death Duty demands, more and more tenant farmers are becoming freeholders. In due time this new and very desirable type of landowner will make the disconcerting discovery that the State offers the heir a reward for the sloth or incompetence of the sire. For a run-down farm has a lower value for probate than a farm run to maximum productivity, and so enjoys the lesser liability.

The recently introduced Government scheme to enable the small man to buy his own home will create a new and probably large class of landowner. Prior to the scheme, the man who wished to buy his home freehold had to

find at least one-third of its value. This limited home ownership to a fairly substantial class. Now it is possible for the buyer to borrow up to 95 per cent. of the value, and so a very numerous class of small landowner is likely to come into existence in the near future.

In a sense, one might say that we have come full circle, or are in the process of so doing. For as twilight

falls upon the magnificence of a past age and the vast estates that came into being as the reward of those who did knight service, or as the fruits of the wealth that flowed into England from the Orient in the 18th century, there may emerge a great new class of small landowner: the "little man", proud and secure in the possession of his freehold home.

GEORGE GODWIN.

PILGRIMAGE TO BAYREUTH

By KENNETH ROSE

FOR the first performance of *The Ring* in 1876, Wagner ordered the dragon to be manufactured by an English firm. The neck, unfortunately, did not arrive at Bayreuth in time, and the head had to be jammed grotesquely on to the body. It afterwards transpired that the missing part had by mistake been despatched to Beirut, in the Lebanon.

Such an error is not unknown even to-day. A famous English gramophone company chose the same unconventional route this year to write to the present producer of *The Ring*. But in the intervening century Wagner has become a legend, the Bavarian town of Bayreuth a Mecca, and the annual four-week festival a reverent pilgrimage.

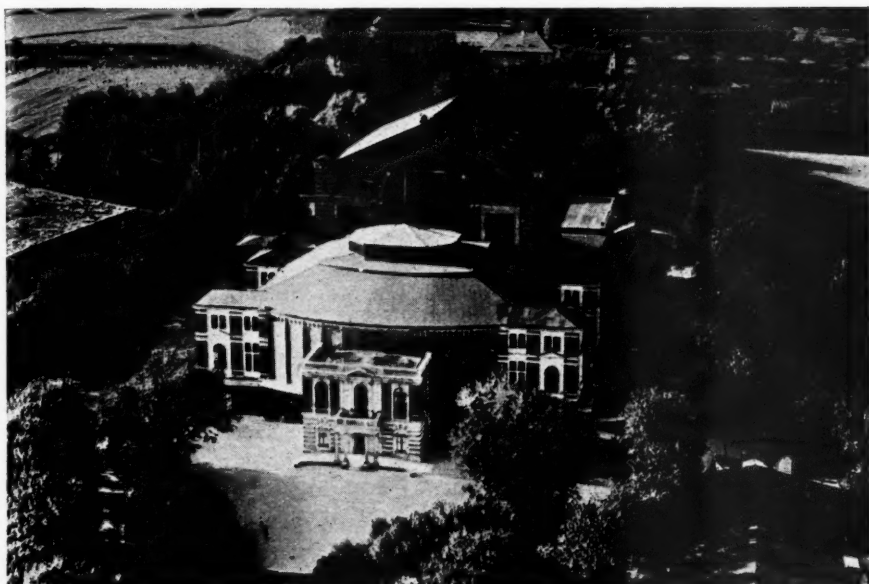
There is something a shade incongruous about the choice of Bayreuth for the purpose. Surrounded by soft wooded hills, its streets would not be out of place as settings for conventional Ruritanian musical comedies. The loveliest of the baroque treasures with which a succession of 18th-century Margraves endowed the town is the opera house.

Wagner, reading of its particularly large stage, at one time contemplated producing his operas there. It can have been but a passing whim. Mozart alone is fitting for that extravagantly glittering interior, those gay rococo fantasies. Wisely, Wagner turned to a hill on the edge of Bayreuth for his new opera house. But after laying its foundation stone, it was in the baroque theatre that he conducted a renowned performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

The new *Festspielhaus*, a large red barn constructed in the pretentious style of Imperial Germany, dominates Bayreuth. Withdrawn from the 18th-century frivolity of fountain and façade, it squats on its eminence in massive disapproval. An intolerably ugly exterior is redeemed only by its setting and a noble approach of chestnut avenues.

Wagnerian architecture, it cannot be denied, is melancholy. Over the villa *Wahnfried*, where Richard and Cosima are buried, broods a perpetual autumn. Their damp and joyless tomb is guarded by municipal horticulture at its bleakest. For remembrance lie a hand-

PILGRIMAGE TO BAYREUTH



THE FESTSPIELHAUS AT BAYREUTH

ful of wilting lilies—the sort of flowers, a friend remarked, which Kundry might have brought back had she been sent out to do the shopping.

For one month each year, Bayreuth is given up to an uncritical cult. If phonetic spelling becomes necessary on the telephone, no inhabitant would dream of rendering double-s in any way except “Siegfried, Siegfried.” Owners of houses in the town turn their drawing-rooms into bedrooms, less from commercial gain than from a sense of duty. Without this accommodation, the festival could never absorb its swarms of visitors.

Profiteering is practically unknown. One is not pestered to buy busts of Wagner or postcards of Cosima, cigarette boxes fashioned like the *Festspielhaus* or beer mugs which play the Prelude to *Lohengrin*. Bayreuth has kept its self-respect. Its loyalty to Wagner is no less impressive. Groups of inhabitants haunt the approaches to

the opera house like people outside a building where murder has been committed—awed, excited, unsatisfied. I wish someone would start a fund to buy them tickets for the opera: costing between £3 and £4, they must be beyond the reach of most local folk. Only once did I hear a note of disloyalty. It was when a barkeeper guiltily admitted that for her part she preferred Verdi; then she blushed.

Like all pilgrimages, Bayreuth has its inconveniences. Baths are scarce and not always hot; beds are of peculiar construction, embodying several enormous pillows and little else. To cash a travellers' cheque in a bank invariably involves a tedious wait while the customer in front leisurely withdraws his entire life-savings in ten-pfennig pieces.

The pilgrims, however, are of stern temperament and sturdy build. Between acts they stroll on the terrace of the *Festspielhaus* until a band of

musicians announces the end of the interval by playing a Wagnerian theme from the balcony. It is then that they may best be scrutinized. Clothes tend to be of unusual or obsolete cut. Interesting experiments have been made in the shape of beards. Men in leather suits argue fiercely with women clad in tapestry. This is no placid and fashionable gathering such as can be found in almost any other opera house from San Carlo to the Metropolitan.

Visions of loveliness, coutured in Paris and bejewelled in Bond Street, attract little admiration at Bayreuth. Shamefaced at their worldliness, they steal humbly down the shadows. The audience's behaviour at the end of an act also has a characteristic stamp. There is no burst of applause six bars before the orchestra has finished. The music is heard in silence to the end—even then there is a hushed second's pause before the audience shows its appreciation. Nor are silly cellophane-wrapped flowers handed publicly to the singers. Covent Garden has much to learn about taste.

One of the most agreeable mornings I have ever spent was visiting the *Festspielhaus* for the first time. There some of its secrets were revealed by Wolfgang Wagner who, with his brother Wieland, to-day controls the festival. It has become the fashion to speak of the Wagners as having inherited not a little of their grandfather's temperament and caprice. The impression taken away by a casual English visitor is only of courtesy, charm, humour, hospitality and boundless enthusiasm.

Wagnerian opera is based upon the Greek conception of drama. It is to the character, and not to his surroundings, that audiences must direct their gaze. Thus the orchestra has been made invisible lest it should offer a distraction. Sunk in a deep well which extends partly under the stage, it

is so arranged that its 132 instruments never dominate the singers. Immense care has been taken to perfect the acoustics. The orchestra pit is warmed to keep all instruments at the same pitch, while a false ceiling of three-ply wood, 24 ft. below the real ceiling of the opera house, reflects the mingled sounds of voice and orchestra.

"A large 'cello," was how Herr Wagner described its construction. Even Pablo Casals could hardly have produced a more vibrant loveliness than flows from the strings of the Bayreuth orchestra.

For the singers, Bayreuth has sometimes been described as a sanatorium. Its acoustics have made unnecessary those mountainous human machines of sound production who formerly bellowed their way to fame and fortune. Instead, the parts can be sung by soloists of pleasing appearance and high histrionic ability. At the same time, radio broadcasts and recordings impose a new strain on singers. Fifty years ago, a false note was lost as soon as it had been uttered. To-day it may well be preserved for posterity. This, Herr Wagner insisted, was responsible for the strictest possible code of discipline, which modern singers impose on themselves.

The war severely dislocated the custom of bringing new voices to Bayreuth and training them. He has now taken up its threads once more with considerable success. Max Lorenz, who sang Siegmund in *Die Walküre*, is almost the only survivor at Bayreuth of the old brigade of Wagnerian singers. Herr Wagner is happily untrammelled by any unmusical notions of nationality. "I only demand," he said, "that the singer I engage should be better than the singer whose place he is taking."

Discipline of the voice is not the sole burden which singers at the Bayreuth festival must bear. For *The Ring*, the

PILGRIMAGE TO BAYREUTH



HERR WIELAND WAGNER



HERR WOLFGANG WAGNER

stage slopes towards the audience at such an angle that considerable physical strength is needed to retain a constant balance. Some singers, Herr Wagner told me, lose up to 8 lb. in a night. He thought that this was a more gruelling ordeal even than boxing, when the loss was usually 5 or 6 lb. a night. Each evening, after the performance, the singers can be seen at the Eule restaurant regaining their departed pounds with the help of sausages and beer.

The staging of *The Ring* must be accounted one of the triumphs of modern dramatic production. Just as Richard Wagner wanted to abolish the distractions of the conventional orchestra, so he wished for a simple stage. The elaborate settings of the 1876 production might appear to disprove this contention. When I put the point to Herr Wagner he replied that his grandfather had of course been limited not only by the traditional methods of

19th-century operatic production, but also by the absence of modern techniques in lighting.

Richard Wagner did in fact use electric light at Bayreuth in 1876, to the surprise and indignation of the gas-minded musical critics. The history of his productions is one of progressive simplification. Cosima was particularly dissatisfied with the costumes which the age insisted upon. "They remind me unmistakably of Indian chiefs," she remarked, "and in addition to being ethnographical nonsense, they are branded with theatrical small-mindedness and lack of taste."

Simplicity of staging and costume is to-day the keynote of Bayreuth productions. Herr Wagner is particularly anxious to escape from the disconcerting limitations of scenery and properties, on which so many Wagnerian performances outside Bayreuth have come to grief. Almost with a note of



SCENE FROM *DIE WALKÜRE*, MODERN BAYREUTH PRODUCTION.

apology in his voice he explained that it had been impossible to do away with the tree containing Siegmund's sword in this year's production of *Die Walküre*.

Recent technical advances in stage lighting are, Herr Wagner believes, what his grandfather wished for and would have accepted with confidence. "It was," Ernest Newman has written, "one thing for Wagner to create this mighty drama of earth and water, caves and clouds, gods and heroes, giants and dwarfs; but another to realize it in steel, wood, stone and canvas on the restricted space of a stage."

By an ingenious use of lighting, all such materials are made not only unnecessary but positively destructive

of dramatic effect. The stage vanishes, and the audience is drawn into a scene of infinite distance. Never can an illusion of more depth have been achieved; never has an audience more willingly surrendered its doubts or suspended its disbelief.

Soft blues and greens of infinite variety maintain the illusion of a remote Wagnerian universe. On a few bare, raised rocks the simply clad characters slowly form patterns of movement in subtle harmony with the lights which play on them. Night after night one of the greatest spectacles of modern stage production unfolds before a hushed and hypnotized audience. Hard wooden chairs are forgotten; coughs and colds mysteriously heal; no Wagnerite would consider the

PILGRIMAGE TO BAYREUTH

merest possibility of rustling a chocolate paper. And the hours pass as minutes.

It was after writing this that I picked up George Bernard Shaw's *The Perfect Wagnerite* and read these words: "One had to admit at Bayreuth that here was the utmost perfection of the pictorial stage, and that its machinery could go no further. Nevertheless, having seen it at its best, fresh from Wagner's own influence, I must also admit that my favourite way of enjoying a performance of *The Ring* is to sit at the back of a box, comfortable on two chairs, feet up, and listen without looking. The truth is, a man whose imagination cannot serve him better than the most costly devices of the imitative scene-painter, should not go to the theatre, and as a matter of fact does not." This was written for the fourth edition of his critical commentary in 1923. I would wager that even so perverse a disputer as Shaw might this year have changed his mind.

One must, however, agree with Shaw that Wagner's pre-eminence as a dramatic musician springs from his authorship of the poetry as well as of the music for what he called his "stage festival plays." That these poems have for so many years been badly translated into English may well account for the ridicule which Wagnerian opera has met with in England.

The late Lord Berners once described how at Eton he fell under the spell of Wagner. From the English translation of *Rhinegold* he quoted these lines:

Alberich: Spoilt were your sport if 'stonished I stand here still. Near to me dive then, a poor Niblung longs dearly to dally with you.

Woglinde: He offers to join us.

Wellgunde: Is it his joke?

Alberich: Gladly I'd seek to encircle one of your waists, should you kindly descend.

Woglinde and Wellgunde: The languishing calf. Let us accost him.

Lord Berners added: "It was all pure poetry to me." For other Englishmen with less imagination, Wagner's operas have too often brought a snigger to the lips. I would not have cared to be the man who tittered while the composer's rich swelling periods rolled round the *Festspielhaus* this year.

One of Wagner's earliest works was a Shakespearean tragedy written at the age of fifteen. In the course of the piece, forty-two human beings died. He was therefore compelled in the last acts to call most of them back as ghosts: otherwise he would have been short of characters. Throughout *The Ring*, too, characters diminish steadily in number, by treachery, accident or valour. Sword, fire, water—all take their toll.

Though Wagner does not bring back his characters as ghosts, *The Ring* is surely the most haunted epic in the history of music. One by one the ghostly themes of past operas in the cycle emerge, expand and fade in new guise. *Rhinegold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, *Götterdämmerung*—each displays a gracefully intricate pattern of borrowed melodies. In a word, the pleasure of listening to the cycle is cumulative.

The matchless acoustics of the Bayreuth opera house must not be allowed to rob its orchestra of their due. Never have I heard the orchestral instrument played with such perfection. Under Joseph Keilberth it illuminated the music of *The Ring* with a thousand subtleties, yet never for an instant lost its massive grandeur of momentum. As a listener I experienced for the first time an almost physical anguish. Such is the spell Wagner can weave, it did not surprise me to hear of visitors walking trance-like through the streets of Bay-

reuth after the opera, having forgotten where they were staying.

Looking back on the sustained excellence of *The Ring* this year, there are certain moments never to be forgotten. Hans Hotter, as Wanderer, sitting in Mime's squalid forge as nobly as if it were the throne room of the immortals; Paul Kuën, as Mime, hammering at his anvil like a blind man tapping his way to hell; Martha Mödl, as Sieglinde, her voice soaring out over those of the

Valkyries as she dominates the rocks; Hans Hotter, as Wotan, drawing a curtain of fire round Astrid Varnay as Brunnhilde; he bids her farewell and with breaking heart moves down majestically into the shadows.

A visitor to Bayreuth cannot escape unscathed. Never again will he be able to listen to Wagner elsewhere with the same intense pleasure. It is a penalty, however, which most will gladly pay.

KENNETH ROSE.

A CONSTITUTION FOR PAKISTAN

By JOHN BIGGS-DAVISON

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU has criticized the constitution being drawn up for Pakistan as "rather a mediæval conception."

It is the connection between creed and constitution which Mr. Nehru stigmatizes as "mediæval." The separation of Church and State was in many countries of the West part of the Liberal complex of ideas. The American, French and Russian Revolutions each established a secular State, tolerant to a greater or lesser extent of the private profession of religion, but pursuing aims which were humanistic in their origin. Readers of Mr. Nehru's superb autobiography will know that he has one foot in the 19th century of Parnell and Garibaldi and the other in the century of Attlee and Lenin. For him, as for a multitude of Westerners, "mediæval" is a pejorative word. For Mr. Nehru, though not for all Hindu politicians, a constitution which professes allegiance to a religion is "mediæval" and therefore reactionary and repulsive.

Islam, and "Islam in danger," have made Pakistan. The Indian nationalism of the Congress was and is essentially Hindu. It was Muslim fear that Hinduism intended the absorption of their faith and community which made the continued unity of the subcontinent incompatible with independence of British rule. Pakistan is a homeland for Muslims where minorities are to be justly treated according to Islamic precept.

Since August 15, 1947, Pakistan has marvellously survived the troubles of transition by use of the Government of India Act, 1935, which Section 8 of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, made, with adaptations, an interim constitutional instrument. A Constituent Assembly, which has also served as the Parliament of Pakistan, was set up and by resolution of March 12, 1949, appointed a Basic Principles Committee to lay down the main principles of the Constitution. Pakistan was, however, already an Islamic State, claiming authority delegated through

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the people by Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, and its leaders have spoken of Islamic socialism and Islamic democracy.

Thus, in his inaugural address to the latest conference in Karachi of the International Islamic Economic Organization, the Governor-General of Pakistan spoke of an Islamic way of life combining a just distribution of wealth with individual freedom, and of "a distinctive economic system forming part of Islamic life," subject to adjustment to the conditions of every age. Speaking as President of the conference, Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Khan described Muslims as "people of the Middle Path" between unbridled capitalism to the Right and Communism to the Left. The Islamic social policy proclaimed in Pakistan echoes the not dissimilar ideas current in Conservative and Christian circles in Western Europe. There are those who despise such ideas as "mediæval" in rather the same way as Marx and Engels sneered at the Toryism of Disraeli and his companions of the Young England movement as "feudal socialism."

The Pakistan Government has already provided for the collection of *Zakat*, the traditional alms which the *Zakat* Committee appointed in 1950 had described as "an act of worship." The collection is made through the sale of special *Zakat* coupons. These are then credited to a fund for the establishment of houses for widows and orphans and for the poor.

The Report of the Basic Principles Committee prescribed as Directive Principles of State Policy the banning of strong drink, gambling and prostitution; the eventual elimination of *Riba* or usury, repugnant at one time both to Islam and to Christendom; the proper organization, not only of *Zakat*, but of *Waqfs* (religious endow-

ments) and mosques. Pakistan was to promote Muslim unity outside as well as within the national frontiers and to discourage tribal, racial and other feelings contrary to the egalitarian spirit and teaching of Islam.

The Committee laid down, and the Constitution will forbid, the enactment of legislation repugnant to the Holy Koran and the Sunnah. This does not mean, however, that the Constitution is "totally opposed to any democratic conception." The Head of the State must be a Muslim. (So must the President of the Syrian Republic.) The non-Muslim minorities will be safeguarded as a result of the Constituent Assembly's decision of October 6, 1950, to "provide for freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practise and propagate religion . . . subject to public order and morality." The relevant Report also provided that "subject to public order and morality, every religious denomination or any section thereof shall enjoy freedom in the management of its religious affairs, including the establishment and maintenance of religious and charitable institutions and the acquisition of movable and immovable property for that purpose.

"Similarly," it continued, "no person attending any educational institution shall be required to take part in any religious instruction, or to attend any religious worship other than that of his own community or denomination." It is in India rather than in Pakistan that Christians are anxious because of the attitude of leaders of the major community towards foreign missions.

Pakistan is, and is to be, an Islamic State, but it is not to be a "clerical" State. The Basic Principles Committee proposed that the Central and Provincial Legislatures should be advised by Boards of not more than five per-

sons well versed in Islamic law, who would be appointed by the Head of the State or of the Unit concerned and ensure conformity to the Koran and the Sunnah. An ecclesiastical committee of this kind exists in Iran, but the proposal for "Mullah Boards" in Pakistan aroused the anger of the forward-looking, and has been dropped.

Pakistan is intended to be a Parliamentary Federal State on the Commonwealth, rather than the American, pattern. There is to be Cabinet Government, both at the centre and in the Provinces. As in the Indian, so in the Pakistan, Constitution there is so far no mention of Commonwealth membership. The Constituent Assembly has assumed powers to remove certain ambiguities in the Indian Independence Act and enable it to declare an independent Republic. It has also decided that Pakistan should be a republic within the Commonwealth. Once India assumed this new status with the agreement of her partners and lost nothing material thereby, it became probable that Pakistan would also dispense with the symbol as well as the suzerainty of the Crown, while recognizing its wearer as Head of the Commonwealth.

There will thus no longer be a Governor-General but a Head of the State or President. The Head of the State must be a Pakistani citizen who has reached the age of forty and is qualified for election to the House of the People, and is to be removable only by a two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of the two Federal Chambers. He is intended to be more powerful than a Dominion Governor-General of the Statute of Westminster character; for he will have emergency powers to rule by ordinance or through the Head of a Unit. He will not, however, be an American President. The Prime Minister and Council of Ministers will

be collectively responsible, in the British fashion, to the Lower House of Parliament.

It is expected that the Constitution will contain a Federal List, a Unit List and a third list of subjects within the concurrent legislative sphere of the Federation and the Units. The Basic Principles Committee anticipated that residual powers would lie with the Federation. But the Constituent Assembly has long left undecided the division of powers between the Federation and the Units. The case has been heard for a unitary state or, more plausibly, for a Federation of the two wings, Western and Eastern Pakistan, which are separated by 1,000 miles. It is almost certain, however, that a Federation will come into effect, consisting of East Bengal, Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province, the Tribal Areas with their special arrangements, Bahawalpur State, Baluchistan, the Baluchistan States, Khairpur State, and the Federal Capital. The latter will probably remain at Karachi despite strategic and other objections. The injunction of *Quaid-e-Azam* Mohammed Ali Jinnah that Pakistan cannot yet afford to build herself a Canberra still holds good.

As at the centre, so in the Units, there is provision for a Council of Ministers, which in the Units will be headed by a Chief Minister responsible collectively with his colleagues to a unicameral legislature. The Unit assemblies and the House of the People are to be elected by universal adult suffrage. The Units will be represented as such in a Federal Senate. As elsewhere in the Commonwealth, the Chairman of the Lower House is to be called the Speaker, but Pakistan has outdone other members overseas by a proposal to style as Chancellor the Chairman of the Upper Chamber.

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The Basic Principles Committee recommended parity of representation for East and West Pakistan in the Federal Parliament; there were to be 200 members from each in the Lower House and 60 from each in the Upper House. West Pakistanis, particularly in the Punjab, resented and resisted a scheme which would have given one Province representation equal to that of the rest put together. The Bengalis, numbering more than half the population, thought that the Constitution should give them proportionate representation.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Mohammed Ali, did much to find an acceptable compromise. Under the new formula East Pakistan is to have its majority in the Lower House, 165 out of 300 seats. In the Upper House there are to be 50 seats divided equally amongst the five Units. The result is equal aggregate membership for the two wings in the two Houses. Each House, moreover, is to have equal powers in respect even of Money Bills. A difference of opinion would be resolved in joint session by a majority vote which included at least 30 per cent. of the members present and voting from both East and West Pakistan. Votes of confidence or no confidence were reserved under the compromise to a joint session and would require a majority including at least 30 per cent. from each wing. It was provided that the Head of the State, who would have certain powers in respect of legislation, must come from a different wing from that to which his Prime Minister belonged.

The British Raj is over, but British justice is a phrase to conjure with in Asia. The independence of the judiciary is to be maintained in Pakistan. The Constituent Assembly overruled the Basic Principles Committee and refused powers for the Head of the

State to override the recommendations of the Chief Justice in the appointment of Puisne Judges of the Supreme Court. In July it adopted unanimously an amendment moved by the Law Minister, Mr. A. K. Brohi, authorizing the High Courts to issue writs of *habeas corpus*, *mandamus*, *quo warranto*, and *certiorari* which had not been provided for. It is clearly intended that, as elsewhere, in the Commonwealth, the Executive should be answerable to the jurisdiction of the Courts.

Steps have already been taken for the Constituent Assembly to safeguard the independence and terms of employment of the Services. Begum Shah Nawaz urged that public servants should receive guarantees such as they had enjoyed under the British, and the Basic Principles Committee's Report was amended to afford them protection such as they had received under the Indian Civil and Criminal Procedure Codes. It is intended that private Members should be precluded from introducing a Bill in any legislature which would harm a public servant.

English is to remain an official language of Pakistan for twenty years with the possibility of its status being extended beyond that period. Great stress had been placed by the *Quaid-e-Azam* and other leaders of the new State upon the pre-eminence of Urdu, but unrest in East Pakistan, ascribable to alleged discrimination against her people in the central councils of the nation, has won linguistic parity for Bengali.

The Constituent Assembly has heard arguments for and against flexibility in the Constitution. Mr. Brohi favoured an "elastic" Constitution but a Member like Mr. A. Hamid from East Pakistan wanted the Constitution to be not too flexible lest

it fail to preserve the Islamic ideology in "the Godless world." In May the Constituent Assembly revised the Basic Principles Committee's Report so as to make reference to Unit legislatures unnecessary for the amending of non-fundamental articles of the Constitution. Fundamental articles are to be amended only with the consent of both Houses of the Federal Legislature expressed in a separate majority of the total membership and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting, of each Unit legislature, and of the Head of the State. The fundamental articles are those which prevent non-Islamic legislation; which concern the election and removal of the Head of the State, to the Federal and High Courts, to relations between the Units and the Federation, to the Federal, Unit and Concurrent Lists, to the composition of the Federal Legislature (as settled under the Mohammed Ali formula); and, finally, the procedure for amending the Constitution.

The Government of India Act, 1935, divided the Conservative Party and the All-India Federation for which it

provided never came into being. Yet this great measure has a monument in the Constitutions both of India and of Pakistan which have drawn freely upon it. The Pakistan Constitution has taken much longer to produce than that of India. The last lap of a long race has been entered. Sir Ivor Jennings, who gave valuable assistance in the drafting of the Ceylon Constitution, is now in Pakistan. The United Kingdom will soon again be the only sovereign member of the Commonwealth without a written Constitution. A second Republic will soon take its place in our family of nations, claiming the allegiance of 80 millions—more, that is, than the Commonwealth's entire white population. Pakistan looks from Calcutta towards South-East Asia and the Indian Ocean, westwards from Karachi to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. She is linked with Turkey and is strengthening her defences with British and American help. Her future will not be easy, but it may be great.

JOHN BIGGS-DAVISON.

CONGRESS AND THE COMING ELECTIONS

By DENYS SMITH

WHEN Congress next assembles there will be many changes in its membership as a result of the November elections. Both Republicans and Democrats claim that they will increase their numbers. The only safe assertion is that both cannot be correct.

Normally the elections which take place midway in each Presidential four-year term lead to a loss of seats

by the President's party. But there have been exceptions. For instance, the Democrats gained seats in the 1934 elections, in the middle of Roosevelt's first term. Nor does it always follow that the Opposition gains are sufficient to constitute a majority. But this year the parties are so evenly balanced that even slight Democratic gains will give them majorities.

Another reason for Democratic

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hopefulness is that the trend in the primaries, where candidates for the elections are picked in most States by party members, appears to show a "back to liberalism" trend, particularly in the South. This, the Democrats claim, if it is national in scope, will make things more difficult for the Republican Party. Senator Kefauver of Tennessee, one of the leading "liberal" Democrats, won a two-to-one victory over a man who based his campaign on the complaint that Kefauver was too Left-wing. On the other hand Senator McLellan of Arkansas beat an opponent who claimed that McLellan was too conservative.

Perhaps all these two results show is that television is unbeatable. Kefauver won national fame by his television appearances as Chairman of the Committee investigating links between politics and crime. McLellan became known as a leading member of the Sub-committee investigating the Army-McCarthy feud. They may also show that McCarthy is not a political asset. Kefauver's opponent adopted the McCarthy line, while McLellan was the most vigorous cross-examiner of McCarthy and his staff members during the recent hearings.

The Republicans base their optimistic assumptions mainly on the fact that times are good, which always favours the party in power. The serious recession predicted early in the year has failed to materialize. There are spots where economic conditions are none too good and unemployment is high, but these are mostly areas which vote Democratic in any event. The Democrats, for their part, are realizing how wise they were to resist the temptation to start a campaign complaining that the Republicans were not doing enough to check a depression. Republicans are also hopeful because "McCarthyism" has been side-tracked.

At least the label of McCarthyism cannot be hung around the neck of the party as a whole. He has become a bi-partisan problem affecting the entire Senate and the Democrats have been forced to abandon their view that they could sit on the sidelines asserting that McCarthy was solely a Republican responsibility. As McCarthyism has receded as a campaign issue, the President's legislative programme has taken a more important place. Many large-scale and popular measures have been adopted, particularly a complete revision of tax legislation.

One of the big unknown factors in the November elections is the extent to which Eisenhower's popularity can be made a transferable asset. His prestige was the chief reason for Republican success two years ago, but this time, since he is not running for office, the task of linking his name with that of local Republican candidates is more difficult. One device adopted has been to take photographs of each Republican candidate shaking hands with the President for use in local campaign literature. Eisenhower's name is particularly associated with the handling of foreign policy, an executive more than a legislative function. It is a subject which is likely to play an important role in the campaign.

On the whole Republican foreign policy should prove a favourable asset. Communist gains in Indo-China are regarded as a set-back for the West, but not one for which the United States can be blamed. In fact the United States is claiming some credit for the fact that things were not worse than they were. The Chinese Communists' readiness to agree to a truce, so it is widely believed, was due to their fear that if they pushed matters too far the United States would use its sea and air power to halt further Communist advances by military means.

Such criticism of Republican foreign policy as exists is based, as is criticism abroad, on a misinterpretation of what is meant by "the threat of instant retaliation" as a deterrent to a major war. It means instant retaliation appropriate to the provocation involved. When American planes are fired upon in the South China Sea, they instantly fire back. The strategic air force is not at once ordered to drop bombs on Peking. This form of instant retaliation demonstrates both to the Communists and the Non-Communists in South-East Asia that the area will not be lost to the West by default.

The Republican Administration are also claiming credit for having brought a greater measure of stability to the Middle East. The Suez and Persian settlements are considered to have been to some extent achievements of American diplomacy. Responsibility

for the Turkey-Pakistan alliance is claimed with greater justification as a peculiar American success. The net result of these developments is that one of the weakest areas of Western power is now being built up "in depth" as a strong defensive bastion. These developments have not proved pleasing to Zionist sympathisers, but it is the hope of the State Department that the psychological effect, for example, of the Suez agreement will make Egypt more ready to be co-operative and lift its blockade of Israeli ships in the Suez Canal.

The fact that American foreign policy should play an important role in an American election, and that foreign policy successes should be counted upon to influence votes, is in itself a remarkable and encouraging development.

DENYS SMITH.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

FROM "Episodes of the Month,"
The National Review, September,
1904:—

Our hope of preserving peace is founded on the belief that responsible Russia—and it is, of course, only on the action of responsible Russia that we can speculate, because if Russia became irresponsible *cadit quaestio*—realises that the only Power who stands to gain from a conflict between Russia and England is the great *agent provocateur* of Europe, who is working overtime to bring it off. We fancy that the eyes of the Emperor Nicholas have been opened during the last few months to the almost indecent

anxiety of Kaiser Wilhelm on this subject, which had a parallel in the desperate but happily unsuccessful efforts of Germany to induce Russia to move on Herat during our entanglement in South Africa in the dark days of 1899–1900. There must be patriotic and intelligent men in the Royal *entourage* at St. Petersburg—which is not yet a German city—capable of presenting this view to their Sovereign. It is on this factor that we count, and not on any "friendly feeling" for England, which we know to be practically non-existent in Russia at the present time.

BOOKS NEW AND OLD

ECCENTRIC LADY*

By ERIC GILLET

MOTHERS - IN - LAW, like comic clergymen, kippers, and choleric colonels, have for years been a stand-by of music hall and fictional humour in this country. In more serious literature parents-in-law have not received a great deal of attention, and now it is an American, Mrs. Celeste Andrews Seton, who has come forward to put this right in one of the most charming, amusing, and unusual books I have read for a long time.

The fabulously wealthy Jay Gould died in New York in 1892. It was said that his fortune came to more than a thousand million dollars. His eldest daughter, Helen, married Finley Shepard, and she is the heroine of *My Mother-in-law*, a book in which Mrs. Seton depicts her as a lovable, irritating eccentric. Mrs. Seton has been aided by Mr. Clark Andrews, and it is not indicated how much he has had to do with the writing of the book. This is a pity because the portrait which emerges from these pages has been painted with so much care for detail, such scrupulous attention to individual idiosyncrasies, and such unerring accuracy in the selection of illuminating incidents, that the picture is memorable, worthy, I think, to take place beside Sir Osbert Sitwell's picture of his father, the inimitable, unforgettable Sir George.

Mrs. Seton (and/or Mr. Andrews) has exercised an Austenian restraint and irony in writing the book, but there are touches which might have been inspired by Mr. P. G. Wode-

house. It is sometimes extraordinarily funny, and in the end very moving indeed. Helen Shepard and her circle, I feel, must have been exactly like this. Farcical as some of the scenes are, they are also authentic, and although many of the details must have been the author's invention, they carry the stamp of truth.

The Shepard household needs some explanation. Helen did not marry until she was forty-five. Like her husband, Finley, she was passionately fond of children, and she adopted four, Finley Jay, Louis, Helen Anna, and Olivia. She had two personal secretaries, Miss Stebbins, tall, imposing, grey-haired, and Miss Davis, short, stubby, and mild as May. There was also the Pekingese, Chinky, and the butler, Sitwell. They lived either at 579 Fifth Avenue, a large Victorian brownstone mansion; at Lyndhurst, a Gothic castle near Irvington-on-Hudson; or at Kirkside, a two-storey, white colonial house, which stood in the main street of Roxbury, a village in the heart of the Catskill Mountains. This country cottage had twenty-two bedrooms, fourteen baths, twelve

* *My Mother-in-Law*. By Celeste Andrews Seton, with Clark Andrews. Michael Joseph. 12s. 6d.

Grand Man. *Memories of Norman Douglas*. By Nancy Cunard. Secker and Warburg. 25s.

Joseph Vance. By William De Morgan. World's Classics. Geoffrey Cumberlege, O.U.P. 8s. 6d.

Where the Poor are Happy. By Roderic Owen. Collins. 16s.

The Whisper in the Gloom. By Nicholas Blake. Collins. 10s. 6d.

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maids' rooms, half a dozen dens and offices, two dining-rooms, living-room, sewing-room, silver room, house-keeper's room and a connecting corridor between the kitchen and dining porch called the "breezeway." There were also a few "modern conveniences," including a baseball field, a nine-hole golf course, an artificial lake, a boathouse equipped with canoes and two lifeguards, a plant for refining maple syrup, and a bird bath. A life-size silhouette of Rip Van Winkle had been painted in white near the summit of a mountain. An Indian tepee had been thoughtfully placed on the golf course.

It was Louis, the author's future husband, who introduced her to his foster mother at 579 Fifth Avenue. She saw a little plump lady of sixty-odd years, with full rosy cheeks and tiny feet. Mrs. Shepard was quietly dressed, but she was not the simple person she appeared to be:

Her thin, tight lips, her sharp, penetrating blue eyes, and her firm chin were the outward features of great strength and stubborn determination. Instinctively I felt there was little chance of ever being yourself in her presence. I must put on a mask of rigid formality and play a part. My duty would be to please her—never myself. She might have many naïve beliefs and customs, but she would project them with a will of iron. She reminded me somewhat of pictures I had seen of Queen Victoria. If Mrs. Shepard said, "Gentlemen, the earth is a parallelogram," no one would dispute it in her presence.

The more Mrs. Seton got to know of her mother-in-law, the less she felt inclined to revise this first impression, and in five minutes, with gentle, inexorable pressure, Celeste was put through a close examination about herself and her tastes, ending, a little

surprisingly with a request that she would recite the twenty-third Psalm. She did so, with one prompt from Miss Stebbins.

Helen Shepard was deeply religious. She had a passion for bird-watching. Her knowledge of botany was encyclopædic. She was an untiring philanthropist. One year she tried to stop Mohammedanism single-handed by distributing Bibles all over the Middle East. During the Spanish-American War, she wanted to give the Navy a destroyer. When she heard that Mormons had as many as ten wives, she wrote a cheque for \$6,000 for the Crusade against them. Her gifts were extensive and far-flung. They took in the National Society of Magna Charter Dames and the American Hussite Society. Louis remembered that she was a member of the World Narcotic Association and The Lantern League of the Old North Church. As a railway owner, she learned to drive a train, became facile in Morse, and in a train-smash tended the injured with compassion and good sense. It was then that she came to know the man she married. The kindly son of a minister, Finley Shepard combined a knowledge of the Bible with a sound understanding of railways and double-entry book-keeping. It proved to be an ideally happy marriage, but it was Helen who regulated her own life—and his.

The Shepards' progress through the years and seasons was as carefully ordered as is that of Royal personages. She made her own rules and ordinances. In the great Pompeian swimming pool at Lyndhurst in 1935, the girls wore black cotton stockings with bathing suits. The life-guard was always on duty. This had been proved essential when he saved the life of a most important member of the establishment. Chinky had been

ECCENTRIC LADY

rescued from a marine grave. He was the lifeguard's only customer.

The arrangements for golf at Kirkside were no less formal and elaborate. Mrs. Shepard was fond of the game and played impartially in foursomes, fivesomes, sixsomes, and even, on one remarkable occasion, in a ninesome, when Mr. Shepard was heard to say that this was the largest concentration of women ever seen on a golf course since the year 1491, when James the Fourth of England banned the game for constituting a public nuisance.

A large gallery greeted Mrs. Shepard when she arrived at the first tee with her three opponents. Her method was peculiar. After her caddy teed up her ball, she raised her index finger to see which way the wind was blowing, and took her stance. She made no perceptible movement. The seconds ticked away and the suspense was mounting. "Then it happened: with a sway and a slow backswing that can only be described as resembling the letter 'Z' and a low downswing resembling the letter 'Y' she hit her ball a resounding 'ping' straight down the fairway for sixty yards." The onlookers applauded sycophantically.

Mrs. Shepard must have become accustomed in childhood to flattery and seems to have ignored it. One of the aspects of her character which the book brings out extremely well is the resolution, the fixed determination she brought to everything she did. Abysmally and often wilfully ignorant as she was of what went on in the less fortunate world around her, she was always, within her own limitations, a strict and honest Christian. There is no doubt that she regarded herself as a humble and religious person, though she would have found it difficult to face life without her understanding husband, her family, the Misses Stebbins and Davis, and the retinue of relatives and

servants. She would have been lost, too, without the rules and customs of her three households. The Lyndhurst classes, the New York Sundays, the ceremonial family kisses, the signatures in the Guest Books, all these were as carefully regulated as the great battalion of clocks and chronometers at Kirkside. And when she died there, at Christmas time in 1938—with the things she had always treasured—flowers, letters, the Bible, and, above all, her family—beside her, it seemed appropriate that the words of the twenty-third Psalm should be the accompaniment to her going. She had been an odd, kindly, and sometimes an intimidating figure. She had never wanted for anything except for children of her own, and there seems no reason to suppose she had ever doubted that she would dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Mrs. Seton (and Mr. Andrews) deserve to be congratulated on a most original performance, and the publisher on a pleasant format, with illustrations so carefully chosen that they really add something to the text.

Miss Nancy Cunard's approach to Norman Douglas, *Grand Man* as she calls him, is much less selective. It is, in fact, chaotic, but out of a cataract of reminiscence, letters, appreciations by other people, and a bibliographical note by Mr. Cecil Woolf, she has contrived an account of an extraordinary personality, which is revealing, appreciative, and charitable. The appreciation is a little uncritical, but this is a fault on the right side, after Mr. Aldington's curious book, in which praise offered with the right hand is carefully removed by the left. Miss Cunard has attempted to give as clear an account as she can of what she calls Douglas's "radiant humanism," exhibiting this quality from her personal and other friendly memories. She

thinks of him as a master of modern prose, a great individualist, a free spirit, and a salubrious iconoclast. Douglas had the supreme virtue of detesting sentimentality and hypocrisy wherever he found them. He could be as severe as Dr. Johnson and as cutting as Swift, when he encountered these vices. Three-quarters Scottish and one-quarter German himself, he inherited pertinacity and a passion for truth. His interests were, in the truest sense of the oft-quoted epithets, extensive and peculiar. His career has been misrepresented and vilified. A legend sprang up about him in his lifetime. It was even said in a famous American periodical that he died in penury in a borrowed villa, although his income at that time was over a thousand pounds a year, and he had his own apartment in a friend's house.

Miss Cunard's forthright approach to life captivated Douglas at their first meeting. Their friendship increased and she saw him almost always at his best. Very many people did, and there are some who have read his books who feel that some of them will endure when more pretentious authors of the period are forgotten. It was Lytton Strachey who once wrote to Douglas: "Your books are so full; there is so much of many things in them—so much experience, so much learning, so much art, so much humour, so much philosophy, and so much proof that there is so much, so very much, more underneath that is unexpressed." There is, too, so much to shock the conventionally minded. Perhaps that is why Douglas's books are not even more widely read than they are.

Popular acclaim is capricious. When I read William De Morgan's *Joseph Vance* not very many years after it first appeared in 1906, the sixty-six year old author had been compared with half a dozen great Victorian novelists

on the strength of his initial attempt at fiction. For years he had been known as a ceramic artist. His beautifully decorated pottery and his lovely lustreware had already won him a reputation second to none in these arts at the time. He was not a business man. A mistaken medical diagnosis forced him to winter abroad and he had to shut down his factory. When he was sixty-two, he wrote two chapters of a novel, and threw them into a waste-paper basket. When he was ill a few years later, his wife suggested that he might continue the tale, which grew into a 250,000-word novel, *Joseph Vance*. After several publishers' refusals on both sides of the Atlantic, the book found a very large public and De Morgan continued author until he died in 1917.

The World's Classics have now honoured the book by including it in the famous series. The selectors are jealous of the honour they are able to confer. I wonder whether they are right to give it to *Joseph Vance*. I have never been able to surrender entirely to De Morgan's method with its divagations and discursions. Mr. Ward, who writes an introduction, notes a similarity, which De Morgan acknowledged, to Dickens, but Mr. Ward feels that in various particulars the ability to express sentiment without excess, in economy of statements which touches human relationships to the quick, above all in the portrayal of women, De Morgan was Dickens's superior. I believe this is true. The great charm of *Joseph Vance* lies in the character of Lossie Thorpe, who is one of the most endearing women in 20th century fiction. The author is at his best in depicting middle-class English life. His low life is much less happy. De Morgan had far more common sense and much less genius than Dickens, but he had a large-

sized talent, and I was amazed to discover how much of the book I remembered and how little inclined I was to meet some of the tragedies which the unfortunate Joseph, a criminally misrepresented man, has to endure before he finds his beloved Lossie again at the book's end. All the women in the book are excellent. George Meredith has often been praised rightly for his heroines and dowagers. I had forgotten how admirably De Morgan depicted his women characters. In addition to Lossie, Mrs. Vance, Janey, and Violet are sharply drawn. The book is written in a sometimes maddeningly flash-back style that should bring joy to some of the British studios. What fine parts it would offer to five or six actresses, one unselfish hero, and several undesirables, but I am afraid that the film people would never be content with De Morgan's economy of method when Joe's wife is drowned off the coast of Portugal:

But the great black promontory came no nearer, to all seeming. And the hand he held was lifeless. And his own senses were failing fast—and then his power died in his own hands, and he could hold hers no longer. And it slipped away from him and the darkness closed in upon him, and he knew no more.

To anyone in search of a long, sincere period story and prepared to surrender to the author's erratic and circumbulatory way of telling it, I recommend *Joseph Vance*, with the proviso that De Morgan did make things uncommonly hard for the virtuous, a handicap not unknown in life.

The remedy for such unfortunates is, obviously, for those who have read Mr. Roderic Owen's *Where the Poor are Happy*, to visit the South Sea Islands, if only they can arrange to be trans-

ported thither. That seems to have been the author's main difficulty. When it was overcome, he found that Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and Tahiti were friendly places, and that it was possible to live on them for very little if one did not aspire to high standards of life. In fact he almost decided to remain in Tahiti, which pleased him most of all. His experiences were varied and he managed to keep going by a number of haphazard employments. He was assistant purser, cook in a private yacht, caretaker and fortune teller. He often lived "rough." He is a close and critical observer and, sometimes, an intolerant one, but he has managed to capture the spirit of these remote places and he has the ability to make a sketch of a casual acquaintance in a few lines. His adventures are a blend of shabbiness, squalor, humour and beauty. He notes the elegance of a cloud of mosquitoes drifting "like clouds of militant thistledown through the velvety air." He revels in the bathe in silver-black waters, "where the coolness of a lifetime seemed to soothe." He notes, fascinated, "the confusion of drumming and guitars, the hucksters' harsh voices croaking against each other down avenues of sound and colour." Mr. Owen knows how to travel. He is able, fortunately, to let others know exactly what his methods are.

The holiday maker who has chosen September and the unfortunate who has come back to work may both find that they appreciate a cheerful, improbable and very well-written thriller. When Mr. Cecil Day Lewis gives his muse a rest, he allows his *alter ego*, Nicholas Blake, to tell a story, and *The Whisper in the Gloom*, with the title taken from a Lionel Johnson poem, is the latest of them. I have rarely come across a thriller with a

better opening—A. E. W. Mason's *No Other Tiger* is the only one I can think of—and Nicholas Blake keeps things going at breakneck speed to the tremendous climax in the Royal Albert Hall, where Sir Malcolm, it seems, is conducting *Belshazzar's Feast*. No lover of this kind of tale can afford to

miss *The Whisper in the Gloom*, and I venture to commend it to the attention of any enterprising British film studio. With its three boy heroes, various beautiful ladies, a super-criminal fit to end super-criminals, and a splendid final sequence, it ought to be a wow.

ERIC GILLET.

BORN TOO SOON*

By LORD ALTRINCHAM

WITHIN the narrow limits set by the halcyon age in which he lived, Lord Roberts of Kandahar proved himself a soldier of genius, a leader of great foresight in military reform and, in the estimation of his contemporaries, a great man. He was born in 1832 and won his Victoria Cross in the Indian Mutiny at the age of twenty-six. He was turning eighty-two when World War I broke out. Between those two events the brief but brilliant campaigns which he waged in Afghanistan and South Africa gave him his only opportunities of proving his capacity as a leader in the field. This was barely twice as many weeks in a life-time of eighty-two years; but each campaign bore the hall-mark of his genius—strategic instinct piercing as keenly as lightning into a tangled situation and followed through with confident mastery to a swift and decisive conclusion.

The rest was peace-time soldiering and in the last phase of his life a national campaign for compulsory military service which was nothing less than heroic for a man of his years. It failed for the time being; and—as I believe and shall try to show—he was

content that *for the time being* it should fail, since it could not be reconciled with Lord Haldane's organization of Expeditionary Force and Territorial Army needed to meet the German challenge which he foresaw immediately ahead. But it bore fruit later in that war and is now fixed in the pattern of national life.

His contemporaries then were right—Lord Roberts was a great man. His tragedy, and the Empire's, was that he was not born a generation later. Had he been as young as Haig or even French in 1914, World War I would have been more wisely fought, and European history would have been different. For history shows that genius, to prove itself in action, must coincide with opportunity.

I have often pondered in what lay the secret of the sense of greatness and unshakeable trustworthiness emanating from him like an aura which never paled; and I have found no better answer than that given by F. S. Oliver in the wonderful picture of the man we knew which he published in *Ordeal by Battle*, not long after his death. His highest

* *The Life of Lord Roberts*. By David James. With a Foreword by the Right Hon. L. S. Amery. Hollis and Carter. 30s.

BORN TOO SOON

intellectual quality was not a power of analysis or reasoning but an unflinching flash of instinct which invariably pointed him the way; and his greatest moral quality was the calm and unquestioning faith with which he followed that gleam. Humbly and reverently, he accepted as from on high the light which on all strategic issues irradiated him and obeyed its promptings unhesitatingly. When once that curious radiance held him, he could not be turned aside. He was, as Kipling wrote:

Clean, simple, valiant, well-beloved,
Flawless in faith and fame,
Whom neither care nor honours moved
An hair's-breadth from his aim.

Mr. David James, who does not seem ever to have known him, has painted this picture supremely well, and has thus made an indispensable contribution, long awaited, to the nation's highest range of biography. Well balanced and well written, this book gives the reader a complete and understanding portrait both of Lord Roberts as a public figure rising to a place of his own in the heart of the nation, even though his preaching was set aside, and also as a private being amongst the members of his family and friends—more particularly in the closing years at Englemere, his Ascot home. Few lives have been more nobly lived, from manhood to the grave. It is well for the nation that it now possesses a book which does justice both to the man and the theme. Alas that his elder daughter, noble as himself, whose signature as his heir was (apart from the "F. M.") so completely like his own and who gave up her life to him, should not have lived to see this justice done.

There is one point of history only in the book which took me by surprise. It is the account of the attitude taken by Lord Roberts at the Council of War summoned to Downing Street by Mr.

Asquith on August 5, 1914. I had always understood that Lord Roberts then advocated that the Expeditionary Force should be landed aggressively on the unprotected right flank of the German advance through Belgium. Mr. James states that Lord Roberts contented himself with urging that all six available divisions should be sent at once to whatever point the French Command might require.

This statement must be accurate, since it rests on the authority of Sir Winston Churchill, the only surviving member of that Council; but Lord Roberts can have spoken thus only because he realized it was already too late to do otherwise, and the point has so significant a bearing on what would unquestionably have been the conduct of the war had Lord Roberts been younger that I feel bound to give my own crystal-clear recollection of his views upon the subject.

The occasion was for me unforgettable, though (having never kept a diary) I rely on memory for it. It was on a morning of 1912. Lord Roberts had asked me to come round to his house in Portland Place, as he wished to say something about the close of his National Service campaign, in which I had been a very humble drafter of speeches and organizer. I found there Lord Milner and F. S. Oliver—no one else that I remember. Lord Roberts was standing in front of a high padded fender with a good fire behind it. Before him was a small table with what I saw to be a map of Western Europe upon it. He motioned to us, and we gathered round the table.

He leant forward, pointed to Belgium on the map, and with a sweep of his hand said: "The Germans will advance through Belgium and wheel on Paris". This was the Schlieffen Plan, designed to turn the French offensive south of the Ardennes; but it was un-

suspected by the French Command and also, in consequence, by the British. Lord Roberts proceeded. Everything, he said, would depend upon the use made of Haldane's Expeditionary Force. It was too late for National Service; the Expeditionary Force must be this nation's instrument, and it should be thrown against the Germans' right flank, their point of weakness. He would do all he could to secure acceptance of this doctrine.

There was nothing that we, his listeners, could do, and I do not know what more he did himself, except that I remember one or two later and unusually severe comments on French as no better than a Corps Commander, who was not so bad on six days of the week but invariably lost form altogether on one of the seven. Roberts's argument, in any case, clearly did not prevail with the French or British staffs. But it is quite certain in my mind that, had he been listened to, Sir Winston Churchill's intervention at Antwerp would have been undertaken far earlier and more effectively. Equally certain is it that this country would never have been committed to the mulish war of trench system against trench system, without flanks, which cut so deep a swathe in the best of its manhood. Sir Winston would have had a colleague at the head of the Army with his own instinct and imagination.

Alas that this could not be! At eighty-two Lord Roberts, despite the clarity of his instinct, was physically out of the running. He offered to serve under Kitchener, who (not unreasonably) saw no way of accommodating him. So he crossed to France to inspect the troops he knew so well, especially from India; overstrained himself, went down with pneumonia, and died within sound of the guns about Ypres, which were striving to prevent the Germans from planting their right

upon the Channel. Sir Winston was left alone with Roberts's clear perception of the folly then obstinately pursued by French and British strategy—lines entrenched to miles of depth, no flanks to turn, and cavalry still expected to pierce them. He did his best—at Antwerp and afterwards at Gallipoli; but it is a remarkable fact that even to this day it is only the German official histories which have fully recognized the rightness of his and Lord Roberts's intuition.

History and its might-have-beens! If only the leader of genius who stood before that map in Portland Place in the spring of 1912 had been twenty years younger!

ALTRINCHAM.

THE PEOPLE'S WILLIAM

BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN. By Janet Beveridge. *Hodder & Stoughton*. 15s.

THE Beveridge Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services was published in December 1942. It was debated by the Commons in January 1943 and then put into cold storage until action was taken on it in the White Papers of 1944 and the Labour Government's legislation of 1946. Lady Beveridge wants to know why there was this delay. Why was the Report not adopted immediately? Why, when everyone said how good it was, did the Government not stop what they were doing and concentrate on the Report?

It is a misfortune that such an approach should have been made to the story of the famous Report. Lord Beveridge's name is honoured wherever social security problems are discussed. To parade him through a book of this sort as the people's William can only cause embarrassment to his friends and joy to his enemies, if any such exist.

The plan of the book is simple. The career of Lord Beveridge is sketched from his childhood in India, schooldays at

THE PEOPLE'S WILLIAM

Charterhouse, on through Balliol, the Law, Toynbee Hall, the *Morning Post*, and so into the Board of Trade. The picture lacks depth, however, as from his Oxford days onwards the object is all too clearly to prepare the way for the Plan. Very little is said about his time as Director of the London School of Economics and the principal reference to his tenure as Master of University College, Oxford, is the laconic caption to a picture "Master's garden at Univ. This he gave up." Two chapters deal with the enthusiastic reception given the Beveridges on their American tour and another to the European reception of the Plan.

The heart of the matter is the reception given to the famous Report. Unfortunately Lady Beveridge gives no summary of its provisions and the reader must either look it up for himself or go in danger of believing that it is still in cold storage.

The effective birthday of the Plan was December 1941, when a memorandum on "Basic Problems of Social Security with the Heads of a Scheme" was circulated. A second memorandum dealing with "The Scale of Insurance Benefits and the Problems of Poverty" was circulated in January 1942. The Report itself was presented to Lord Jowitt, Paymaster-General, in October 1942, and published on December 1, 1942. Throughout this period there had been continued publicity for the Plan. Beveridge was hailed as "The Man No Government Can do Without" by the *Daily Mirror*, and in more restrained but no less enthusiastic terms by *The Times*.

The work for the Report had been carried out with the help of a group of civil servants, but it was signed by Beveridge alone. According to Lady Beveridge the Government intended to give it "the minimum of publicity." Lord Beveridge himself, we are told, "did nothing to seek publicity." Nevertheless the publicity it received was tremendous and the Government, rightly or wrongly, appear to have formed the view that the Report was being used for party purposes. The incident of the recalled A.B.C.A. pamphlet confirms this view. In the House Sir

James Grigg, Secretary of State for War, explained that the pamphlet had been withdrawn because it would be premature to deal with it in A.B.C.A. discussions (which were compulsory parades) before it had been discussed in Parliament.

The debate in the House in January 1943 provides Lady Beveridge with plenty of ammunition. Mr. Attlee is observed in the Lobby "scurrying in the opposite direction like nothing so much as the White Rabbit." Kingsley Wood is identified as "a principal opponent of early action on the Beveridge Plan." Ernest Bevin ("Man cannot live by Beveridge alone"), and Sir Winston Churchill are the arch-enemies however. Throughout the book the Prime Minister is represented as at best lukewarm in his attitude towards social security legislation. ("The last time he came into even a bowing acquaintance with the problems was in 1925.") He made no public reference to William or to his Report. But nemesis was at hand. The withdrawal of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet and the Parliamentary debate "made certain the defeat of Sir Winston in 1945."

The great weakness of the book is that Lady Beveridge seems unaware that there was a war on. The Plan's the thing is all very well, but there would have been even longer delays in its implementation if the Prime Minister had done as she appears to believe he should have done. It is one thing to deplore the fact that social security should have become a party matter, it is another to impute ignoble motives to all those who believed that the winning of the war came first.

It is unusual for a wife to defend her husband's offspring even in literature and the extravagance of some of Lady Beveridge's strictures is quite absurd. For example: "As I write a new edition of *Full Employment* is in the press. What has happened, I wonder, to the White Paper?" The White Paper in question is the famous Cmd. 6527 *Employment Policy* of 1944, the first statement of Keynesian principles in terms of Government policy. (Incidentally it is to be hoped that the new edition of *Full Em-*

ployment when it comes from the press will have been purged of the ridiculous forecasts of which the late Sir Hubert Henderson disposed so amusingly in his 1947 Rede Lecture.)

Again: "If William's advice had been followed at the time, there might have been no need for the Guillebaud Committee." It is hard to see how even William's advice would have altered the age structure of the population or halted inflation. Beveridge's proposal was that the payment of full pensions should have been introduced gradually so that the charge on general taxation, described in *Power and Influence* as his "deal with Keynes," would at first have been limited to £86 million a year for family allowances. In view of what has happened since, there can be little doubt that social security payments would have been made on a much bigger scale than this under one name or another.

At the end of the book many questions remain unanswered. Did the Beveridge Plan suffer from the delay? Would it not have been better to have considered some of its proposals, such as the flat-rate subsistence pension, a little longer? Was there a plot to keep the Beveridge Report in the background or was the reality a counterplot to use it for political purposes? Is it not possible that one of the reasons the Plan received so much publicity was the desire of the newspapers for anything that provided a change from the eternal war news? Finally, what reason is there for believing that the Government which produced the 1944 White Papers and the Education Act would not have dealt with the other parts of the Plan? There can be no cut-and-dried answers to these questions. But they are just as reasonable as Lady Beveridge's querulous and reiterated complaints.

Her book is dedicated "To all those on whose behalf William went out to slay five giants." What a pity that he was not left to do his own giant-killing.

RICHARD BAILEY.

PASSING SHOW

THE GLASS OF FASHION. By Cecil Beaton. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 21s.

THERE is no subject more difficult for an artist to write about than fashion. In that strange, exotic atmosphere, where the scene changes with such kaleidoscopic speed, and the personalities of the actors involved tend to obscure their achievements, the onlooker is all too often beguiled into confusing shadows with reality. Fashion, it is often said, is a distorting-mirror, and it is one in which only a few can see clearly the image of their own faces. Mr. Beaton, undoubtedly, is of this number. No one is better qualified than he to write about contemporary, or near-contemporary fashion, nor, after reading his book, do I think that any other writer could have done so with such success.

The remarkable thing about Mr. Beaton is, that sensitive as he appears, and indeed must be, to every change of fashion's mood, his judgment remains unaffected. There are so few Englishmen who can write about fashion without either apology or exaggeration that this fact deserves to be appreciated. It cannot be denied that the minor arts fare badly in England. It is one of the paradoxes of our age that moral emancipation appears to have made us all more censorious than ever before. Frivolity is to be deplored, an unnecessary Gallic frill, like learning French, or greed. And among the minor arts none is more reprehensible than fashion, most vain, most lavish and most ephemeral of all.

Fortunately it is also indestructible, and even in our laggard climate, continues to sprout new and hopeful shoots. But always, behind the panache and glitter of fashion lies the tragedy of the artists whom it breaks. For fashion, as Mr. Beaton wisely insists, is more often than not the enemy of art. And fashion artists play a dangerous game, knowing always that "whatever their medium, the odds are against their survival." Time begins as their servant, and becomes their master. One has only to look at the sad, clowns' faces of the great *couturiers* to



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gain a true picture of their frustrated destiny.

No one who reads Mr. Beaton's book can fail to be struck by the immensity of the gulf that yawns between the Edwardian age, in which he was born, and the one in which we now live. How remote the clothes, the tastes and the manners of the early 1900's seem to us now, so short a time after! In our shifting maquisards' world revolutions have become a commonplace. The almost over-night development of the bathroom and the motor-car leave us unmoved. It is only the past that causes us any surprise. Nothing is easier than to be patronizing about near-contemporary taste. Only distance lends perspective to a view; and the clothes and tastes that appear ridiculous twenty years after their hey-day become pleasing to the eye of a later and more disinterested generation.

It is to Mr. Beaton's credit that he is an artist who knows when to suspend his judgment. Every decade makes its own contribution to the taste of the times, and at his hands each receives the credit that is its due. Even in the crude and bizarre he traces the source of future beauty. The feathers of Gaby Deslys, the painted femininity of Gabrielle Ray, the vivid mobile countenance of Mr. Cole Porter—a whole world of theatre-boxes and fur tea-cups and high-stepping beauties comes to life beneath his touch. It may be said that the picture suffers through exaggeration; that the superlatives crowd too thickly, that the sayings of famous beauties convey an impression only of overwhelming period banality, and that there are times when Mr. Beaton's stylized little vignettes of the witty and the fashionable read almost like an extract from the obituary column. But against this must be set the book's vitality and enjoyment. We live in stirring times, with fashion humming all around us. There are many of Mr. Beaton's readers, who, when they reach the end of his work, will gladly echo Mme. de Sevigné's inspired utterance: "Dieu, come j'adore la mode."

CHRISTIAN HESKETH.

Novels

- THE WELSH SONATA. James Hanley.
Derek Verschoyle. 10s. 6d.
THE AGENCY GAME. Bernard Gutteridge.
Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 12s. 6d.
THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE. David Unwin.
Michael Joseph. 12s. 6d.
THE GLASS VILLAGE. Ellery Queen.
Gollancz. 10s. 6d.
MARK LAMBERT'S SUPPER. J. I. M.
Stewart. *Gollancz*. 10s. 6d.
NOCTURNE. Frank Swinnerton. *Hutchinson*. 6s.

JAMES HANLEY'S new novel, *The Welsh Sonata*, is in a somewhat different vein from most of his previous books, although I find echoes in it of the early *Aria* and *Finale*. It is really a long prose poem about Rhys the Wound, an eccentric Welsh tramp who carries a Bible strapped to his back. Rhys the Wound has never had his hair cut since his sweetheart, Olwen, ran off with a sailor named Parry, and he wanders from farm to farm, doing odd jobs. One day Rhys the Wound disappears, and after an unsuccessful search, Goronwy Jones, the village constable, a retired bard, starts to write a report in bardic style. In the course of writing it, Goronwy learns many things about Rhys's past, his main sources of information being a small drunken schoolmaster and Mrs. Parry, the mother of Rhys's rival in love.

Mr. Hanley tells his story in an almost Biblical prose, with plentiful use of flash-backs and rhetorical ejaculations from the chorus of Welsh villagers. It is a kind of Welsh *Song of Solomon*. As always, he writes beautifully and with force, and he could not fail to hold his readers' attention. Many individual scenes stand out, notably Rhys's discovery of Olwen and Parry making love, and Goronwy's search round the pubs for the schoolmaster known as Sir Flook. But my own view is that he spins out his story to too great a length. It is full of repetition, and it would have been a more successful work of art if it had been cut in halves. Like Goronwy, listening to Sir

YOU
CAN'T
BEAT



WITH **N·S·O**
(ESSO PATENT)

THE FINEST PETROL IN THE WORLD

Flook's reminiscences, the reader often "ached for the end of a tale, and ached for a distant bed." Nevertheless, it is an interesting experiment in language, and like all Mr. Handley's work it calls for serious study.

After the bardic solemnity of Mr. Hanley, I found Bernard Gutteridge's *The Agency Game* extremely gay. It is light, bright, and brittle, dealing with the sophisticated sharks of a Mayfair Advertising Agency who would sell each other for a double pink gin. Sir Wilfred Limbury, a chocolate tycoon, sends his godsons, Roland Fitch and Billy Kipling, to work in rival advertising agencies in order to decide to which he will donate the advertising campaign to promote a new night-cap drink. Roland's agency gets the job, and the reader is treated to an hilarious description of the methods used for a full-scale promotion. The novel is prefaced by an advertising

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SAYS

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"Grace" ("For those we are about to deceive may The Lord make us truly thankful") and the author does his best to keep up this airy, satirical attitude.

The characters are flippant and amusing, and although I think they would be a bit overpowering in real life, they are entertaining to read about; especially Angela Bingham, the society deb. who has trouble with her bosom, and James Taggart, the blasé copywriter, who refers to the Great British Public as "the Nellies from Scunthorpe." Personally, I do not think there is enough about Angela and James, but maybe other readers will prefer Jon Zerglazz, the Art director, or Mr. Queste, who, unlike his employees, insists upon buying only *small* gins. There is a lot of drinking in the novel. Whenever the author or his characters get tired of their inventions they shoot into the nearest bar, and this makes the action drag a little at times—besides giving the susceptible reader a dreadful thirst!

David Unwin's first novel about racial problems in Africa is more than topical. It is a very clear-cut, unbiassed and sane picture, and I defy anybody to read it without seething with fury, both at the intolerance of some of the white colonists and the superstitious ignorance of most of the natives. Sebastian Pole, a young Englishman, visits the British Protectorate of Bandaland to report on an irrigation scheme intended to benefit the lives of thousands of Africans. Although he tries to remain detached, he is drawn into a series of events which end in the arrest of an old school friend for living with native women, the ritual murder of an educated native girl, and the murder of the British Governor. The novel has weaknesses. I cannot imagine, for instance, that Sebastian would ever become attracted by Patricia Jensen, the girl from the "white" Republic of Equatoria, since her attitude towards the natives is the good old "flog them with a sjambok" one; nor do I believe that he would ultimately fall in love with Rose, wife of the elderly Governor. Patricia strikes me as a monster, and

Novels

Sebastian is, I think, too intelligent to fall for her; and his feelings for Rose are in the women's magazine tradition, tending to detract from the novel's seriousness and making it lopsided. They are weaknesses which are forgivable, however, in an otherwise strong, intensely interesting and well-written book. Mr. Unwin has written a novel which everyone who has read of the recent Mau Mau atrocities should ponder over. It gives both sides of the picture fairly and squarely, without any false sentiment, and I hope it will reach the wide public it deserves.

More "monsters" are to be found in Ellery Queen's new detective novel *The Glass Village*. In fact, if Tennessee Williams had not used the title first it might well have been called *The Glass Menagerie*. This time they are inbred country people in a backwoods community in New England. Aunt Fanny Adams, aged ninety-one, a famous American primitive painter, is found brutally battered to death in her studio. Josef Kowalczyk, a Polish tramp, who has been seen leaving her house and who admits to having stolen money from her, is captured and is only saved from being torn limb from limb by the angry mob at the intervention of Judge Shinn and his young relative, Johnny. The case against Kowalczyk seems cast iron, and the villagers wish to take summary justice. But Judge Shinn insists upon a fair trial, and this is held in the sitting-room of Fanny Adams's house with the villagers being forced to swear in as jurors. Mr. Queen's novel is memorable, not so much as a detective story as a realistic presentation of a primitive community, intolerant, narrow-minded and almost bestial in their emotions. The only pleasant characters in the book are the murdered woman, Judge Shinn, and the minister and his wife.

I read it with fascination, and I got to the point where I did not care which of the others killed Aunt Fanny so long as the tortured Pole managed to escape backwoods justice. I hope that many people who are not ordinarily detective-story fans will read it. It is a terrifying book.

Like numerous others, I admire Michael

Osbert Sitwell

THE FOUR CONTINENTS

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NELSON

Novels

Innes's detective novels. I cannot say the same, however, about his first straight novel, *Mark Lambert's Supper*, published under his own name, J. I. M. Stewart. I found it tedious, long-winded and not in the least entertaining. Anthea Lambert, daughter of a distinguished novelist now dead, lectures on the rather unusual subject of aerodynamics at Oxford. The centenary of Mark Lambert's birth is being celebrated, and Anthea meets a young American, Garth Dauncey, who is writing a thesis on him. Garth believes that Lambert left an unfinished novel, and the plot deals with the search in Lambert's old villa in Florence for the missing MS.

My own opinion is that Mr. Stewart started to write this book as Michael Innes, but got so carried away by highbrow high-jinks that he decided against it, feeling it would never please the detective-story public. I do not blame him. It is just a farrago of words for words' sake. It contains quite an amusing parody of a B.B.C. Third Programme item, but otherwise has nothing to commend it. The characters are eaten up with themselves and their own petty intellectuality, the action is so slow that it is practically non-existent, and the writing is stylized until it is almost unreadable. I was thoroughly bored.

I have only space left to welcome a re-issue of Frank Swinnerton's *Nocturne* in the new collected edition which Messrs. Hutchinson have put out in celebration of his seventieth birthday. This charming story of the love affairs of two sisters, Emmy and Jenny, is a little masterpiece, and should be read at once by anyone who has so far overlooked it.

FRED URQUHART.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART (Murray. 25s.), Scott's biographer and son-in-law, was a curious, able and complex personality. His most enduring work was

Books in Brief

done, not as a poet or novelist, but as a biographer and editor of the *Quarterly Review*. Miss Marion Lochhead's sound and sensible biography appears just a hundred years after his death.

* * *

Messrs. George Allen and Unwin intend that their "New Whitehall Series" shall provide an authoritative, completely up-to-date and readable survey of the Central Government Departments. The first volume is *The Home Office* (15s.), and it has been written by Sir Frank Newsam, the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department. Succinct and authoritative.

* * *

A statistical approach has been made by Mr. A. G. Rose in his *Five Hundred Borstal Boys* (Blackwell. 21s.) and the book's primary aim is to attempt to apply the follow-up method to a group of discharged offenders. Useful work, well worth while.

* * *

In *Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (Bell. 25s.) Sir Mortimer Wheeler gives a fascinating, well-illustrated survey of Roman adventuring outside the political frontiers of the Roman world. The author has made use of personal experiences in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

* * *

The results of the incursion of Russian power into eastern and central Europe are summarized in *Russia's Danubian Empire* (Heinemann. 21s.) by Mr. Gordon Shepherd, a correspondent of the *Daily*

September Books

THE WILDER SHORES OF LOVE

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JOHN MURRAY

Telegraph. He finds "hardly a good word to say" about anything which concerns the liberties and dignities of the individual. It is a formidable indictment.

* * *

Mary Magdalene (Hutchinson. 12s. 6d.), translated by H. L. Binsse, is the first volume of a biography by Father Raymond-Leopold Bruckburger, O.P. It is to be followed by a second on Mary Magdalene's religion. Style, vivid and lively. Well illustrated by photographs of paintings and sculpture.

* * *

Treasure Diving Holidays (Collins. 18s.) is the pleasant title of a book by Dr. and Mrs. Barney Crile. It describes their

methods of teaching their children to be independent and self-reliant by exploring the ocean bed. Their discoveries included elephant tusks, cannon balls, and a lump of coral containing a perfectly preserved Queen Anne pewter teapot. Excellent illustrations.

* * *

Intended for younger readers by the author, Josephine Kamm, *They Served the People* (Bodley Head. 9s. 6d.) gives the stories of ten pioneers who all contributed something valuable to the making of the British Empire. Among them are Sir Stamford Raffles, Sir James Brooke, David Livingstone and Mary Kingsley. Easily readable.

* * *

The Heart of Africa

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

An objective, vigorous and informed report on the ferment of Africa today, by a graduate of Edinburgh University who has lived in South Africa since 1937, and who is well known there as writer and editor.

October.

21s. net.

Life in Russia

Vice-Admiral LESLIE C. STEVENS

The author was a U.S. Naval Attaché in Moscow for three years, and tells of the great public events he witnessed, and of what he saw of the people and their life off the beaten track.

November.

25s. net.

LONGMANS

It is more than thirty-three years since Mr. Percy Lubbock made a considerable stir with *The Craft of Fiction* (Cape. 12s. 6d.). The publisher has done well to present a new edition of a stimulating, well-informed book which has been out of print for far too long. The author is particularly good on Henry James, less happy, perhaps, with the creator of *Harry Richmond*, but he is always well worth reading.

* * *

Talking of Shakespeare (Hodder and Stoughton with Max Reinhardt. 20s.), edited by John Garrett contains eleven lectures given at Stratford by recognized authorities at the instigation of the Governors of the Memorial Theatre. Like Mr. Robert Speaight's *William Poel and the Elizabethan Revival* (Heinemann. 21s.), they contain important material for lovers of the theatre.

E. G.

Financial

TOWARDS CONVERTIBILITY

By JOHN B. WOOD

THE atmosphere at this month's meeting of the International Monetary Fund will be more hopeful than at any previous gathering since the Fund was set up. The movement towards a freer system of international payments is at last well under way, and only a major world disaster can now reverse it. Delegates to the Fund will be particularly encouraged by the prospect of further steps towards the convertibility of sterling next spring.

It is now widely assumed, for instance, that most European countries and some South American countries will be allowed to buy dollars with any surplus of sterling that they can earn sometime early next year. This, broadly, is what is meant by making sterling convertible on non-resident account. At first sight, it seems a brave step to take. The pound sterling has been plagued by successive crises since the war. Though we have made astonishing progress in the last two years, there are a number of special reasons for this. The tide may turn against us once more, some people urge, in which case this would be no time to make it easier for the rest of the world to buy goods from the United States rather than from the sterling area.

In contrast, there is the view that what may happen next spring will be no more than an administrative recognition of the position that we have already reached. This has led some commentators to wonder whether a more drastic elimination of exchange controls may not be intended. For instance, we might allow the sterling countries the same degree of freedom that we are apparently to extend to the rest of the world. This difference of opinion deserves to be examined.

The first point to make clear is that we have been approaching convertibility by stealth for over two years. In fact, the first signs of this gradual approach can be traced back to the re-opening of the foreign exchange market, though under severe restrictions, in the days of the Socialist administration. Since then the

scope of the foreign exchange market has been considerably widened, within the limitations imposed by the regulations of the International Monetary Fund. (Incidentally, one of the technical problems which may well be discussed at the September meeting of the Fund, is whether currencies should be allowed to fluctuate more widely than is now allowed by the I.M.F. Next spring's operation might be made easier if sterling could swing more on either side of its fixed parity. This slight change in the mechanism of the foreign exchange market could act as a powerful balancing force.)

The main approach to convertibility has been through the policy of gradually freeing the great commodity markets in London and Liverpool. Few of these

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Financial

markets have yet to be re-opened. It is only a question of time before the situation is back to what it was before the war, with the important qualification that the Bank of England keeps a close watch of these markets to make sure that they are not used merely as a cover for currency operations. With the exception of wheat and cotton, foreigners will soon be able to buy through London almost any commodity, even though originally it may have come from the dollar area. Quite recently the gold market was re-opened. This was more than a symbol of a return to pre-war days. It was an essential prelude to convertibility, even though the Treasury was technically correct to emphasize that "it will afford no additional element of convertibility."

Side by side with the re-opening of the commodity markets, the Bank of England has been quietly simplifying its exchange controls. This has, for the most part, happened so imperceptibly that it has escaped notice. But in March there was a major geographical reorganization of the world into three areas, the sterling world, the dollar world, and the rest. This replaced the infamous system of "57 varieties" of sterling, and it is interesting to note that the rate for the rest of the world's sterling was soon near to the official parity, though previously, many of the "57 varieties" had been well below it.

Lastly, the British Government has slowly persuaded other European nations to join it in a "collective approach" to convertibility. This has been a small triumph of economic diplomacy. Not long ago it seemed that some countries, particularly Germany, wished to "go it alone" towards convertibility, in a way which would increase the burden on sterling. But the meeting in London, in the middle of July, of the European Ministers was brilliantly successful, and now all currencies will move towards freer conditions in a way which is mutually helpful.

This history of the moves towards convertibility during the last two years or so, provides the clue for the future. It suggests that we shall continue the same

TOWARDS CONVERTIBILITY

policy of getting nearer to full convertibility by small stages. It is most unlikely that the freedom to change sterling into dollars will be granted to sterling area residents at the same time as it is granted to non-residents. There is still no question of a "dash to freedom."

How soon a more complete dismantling of the exchange controls can be expected depends, of course, on the strength of the pound sterling. The progress of the last two years was only made possible because confidence was restored in the pound. The British balance of payments now seems in better shape than at any time since the end of the war. Even its Achilles heel, the export trade, is not giving rise to overmuch concern. And countries in the rest of the sterling area have at last taken sufficiently drastic measures in their domestic policies to make them useful members of the gold and dollar pool. As a result, the sterling area has for a long time been receiving more dollars than

it has been spending, even without taking into account the various forms of dollar aid. The central reserves of the whole area have almost doubled since early in 1952, and now rest at about 3,000 million dollars. Moreover, this improvement still continues. The latest figures for July showed astonishing buoyancy in the sterling area's ability to earn dollars. For in that month, nearly 90 million dollars had to be paid out of the reserves under the special scheme to repay the accumulated debts to the European Payments Union countries. Yet with only small receipt of dollar aid, the reserves were only 4 million dollars down at the end of the month. The debt was nearly covered by current earnings during a month which is usually a bad one for earning dollars, because few commodity crops are on the move.

The same picture is to be found in Western Europe, which has also vastly improved its dollar earnings. Since the

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end of 1952, the United States has lost no less than 1,500 million dollars worth of gold to the rest of the world. And this has been achieved in the teeth of an American recession which only a matter of months ago many commentators thought would bring disaster to the economies of the free world.

Clearly, then, the non-dollar world shows every sign of being able to dismantle many of the various restrictions and devices which protect it against what was once regarded as the overwhelming strength of the dollar. Its reluctance to do more than continue to move a step at a time—even though the Western European countries are now working together better than ever before in this field—needs some explanation.

There have been a few special factors behind the recovery of sterling and other European currencies. The cheapening of raw material and commodity prices has greatly helped the terms of trade of the industrial nations. That this favourable trend seems to have come to an end, is one reason for caution. Another is that some, at least, of the rise in the sterling area's gold and dollar reserves has been due to an inflow of short-term capital, which might be withdrawn at short notice. Further, the present excellent showing of the non-dollar world depends in part on the receipt of dollar aid, and the maintenance of prohibitions or restrictions on dollar imports. All these factors have clearly weighed with the authorities in their choice of slow but sure policies.

There remains one factor of much greater importance—the uncertainty about the future of American policy. At the heart of the forces which have made for a better balance in world trade and payments, one finds the paradox that the Republican Party, traditionally in favour of hard money policies and a "sound" dollar, have in fact been injecting credit into the American banking mechanism on an enormous scale. This, more than any other single factor, has enabled the rest of the world to set its house in order with so little of the

hardship and sacrifice that once seemed inevitable.

Moreover, we rely not merely on there being no drastic reversal of this policy, but on the Eisenhower Administration eventually being able to make some progress towards reducing American tariffs. For convertibility to have a fair chance, the rest of the world must know that it can earn dollars through selling to America, and that any industry which is particularly successful in doing so will not find the tariffs going up in its face. It is said that this problem is now regarded as most urgent in Whitehall, and the recent decision of President Eisenhower to impose further penalties on imports of Swiss watches provoked a mild wave of despair.

The more complete convertibility of currencies, on which the Americans have been insisting since the end of the war, now depends on real co-operation from the American Government. When that is assured, the technical details of the operation will present no difficulties. Indeed, the provision of stand-by credit, to take the first strain of the freer exchange between currencies, is virtually accomplished. Tentative arrangements between the International Monetary Fund, the United States Treasury, and the European Payments Union and its member governments to build up a fund of credit have already been made, and to make these arrangements more certain and fool-proof will be one of the main tasks of the I.M.F. meeting next month.

JOHN B. WOOD.

RECORD REVIEW

E.M.I. are putting a tape-reproducer on the market in September with a number of works from the standard repertoire made available on tapes. I have not heard enough of this reproducer to give a detailed opinion, but a first hearing conveyed an impression of great clarity of sound and, of course, an absence of the tape-hum that we are familiar with when tape is transferred to disc.

This new move must not in any way be taken to threaten the existence of the L.P. disc: it is merely a complementary device and one, at the moment, which is definitely for the upper income group.

Orchestral

Scherchen is an unpredictable conductor, particularly in the matter of tempo. In his recording of Bach's *B minor Mass* he dragged the *Kyrie* out intolerably, while in some of the arias in the *St. Matthew Passion* he was positively jaunty. Extremes of slowness and fastness now spoil his interpretations, with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, of the three Beethoven *Leonora* Overtures (Nixa WLP5177) but, with the same orchestra, he turns in a really fine performance of the *Eroica* Symphony, free from eccentricity, and so well recorded as to surpass, in this matter, the two rival versions of Beecham (Columbia 33CX 1086) and Karajan (33CX1046). Brahms's Violin Concerto is of those works that have evaded a wholly successful recording up to date, but now we have one that seems to me most satisfying.

Christian Ferras, if not technically in the class of Menuhin or the ever-lamented Neveu, is a very musical and able player and Carl Schuncht, with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, gives a richly beautiful rendering of the lovely orchestral score. The oboe solo, in the slow movement, must be absolutely free, to make its due emotional effect, from any suspicion of acid tone, and such is the case on this disc, as never before (Decca LXT2949).

Othello, the third of the overtures of which *Carnival* is the best known and the most often played, is one of Dvorák's finest orchestral works and one, until recently, rarely heard here in concerts. Its "programme" is love and jealousy and the theme common to all three overtures is here associated with *Desdemona*. The work is, perhaps, more of a tone poem than an overture, and it is suitably backed by *The Midday Witch*, one of Dvorák's five symphonic tone poems (his last orchestral works) and

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the one with the most easily followed programme. Performance (Talich and the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra) and recording are admirable (Supraphon LPM22).

Elgar's *Falstaff* is one of the greatest masterpieces of symphonic literature, but one that needs an understanding of the composer's point of view about the "fat knight" for its proper appreciation (Messrs. Novello publish Elgar's notes on the work, and Tovey wrote a fine account of it in his *Analyses*). Anthony Collins, with the L.S.O., may not have Boult's profound understanding of the rich and varied score, but he gives a very good account of it (Decca LXT2940). Holst's *Planets* appear again in the gramophone sky, this time played by Sargent and the L.S.O. There is little to choose between his version and Boult's, reviewed last month (Nixa NLP903). Both are splendid interpretations and recordings, but Sargent's *Neptune* is the

better of the two as the female chorus keeps in tune and sounds more distant, and the dynamics are more in accordance with Holst's intentions (Decca LXT2871). I must confess that Vaughan Williams's music to the ballet *Job* has never completely held my interest, but for those readers to whom the work appeals there is now a fine performance and recording by Boult, who has a deep affection for the music, and the L.P.O. (Decca LST2937).

Also recommended. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Antar* and Russian Festival Overture, Scherchen and the L.S.O., brilliant recording (Nixa NLP910); and a lovely performance and excellent recording of four of Johann Strauss's best-known waltzes—Rudolf Moralt and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (Philips ABL3002).

Chamber Music

Six sonatas for wind by C. P. E. Bach and a Telemann Suite in D for wind, played in impeccable style by Carl Haas and his London Baroque Ensemble make most delightful listening. Horns and bassoons come into both works: but Bach uses flutes and clarinets, Telemann oboes only (Parlophone PMB1004).

Choral

Sir Thomas Beecham, the R.P.O., the London Philharmonic Choir and the Dulwich College Boys Choir, have made an absolutely stunning recording of the Berlioz *Te Deum*. Alexander Young is the tenor soloist (and at last the recording does justice to his beautiful voice) and Denis Vaughan the excellent organist. The large volume of choral sound (though the forces used are not so large as the composer had in mind) is contained without any suspicion of overloading, and this is altogether a thrilling disc, with moments of spiritual vision in the music that may surprise those who look upon Berlioz as a materialist. I look forward to more choral recordings of this quality from Philips (ABL3006). The same company have also issued a recording of some magnificent singing by the choir of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Paris, of various portions of the Liturgy set by

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Record Review

Lvov, Archangelsky, Kedrov and Bortniansky. Archdeacon Nicolas Tikhomiroff, the soloist, has a voice of remarkable character and the skill to sing, in one piece, slowly up a chromatic scale (with what could be quarter notes as well) and arrive perfectly in tune for the choir to join in. Astonishing! (Philips NBR6002).

Operatic

Decca's recording of Clemens Krauss's performance of Strauss's *Salome* will remain as a splendid memorial of the great conductor: and though I wish the work had been *Der Rosenkavalier* or *Ariadne*, one is grateful indeed for this superb realization of Strauss's sensuous and colourful score. The opera could hardly have been better cast. Goltz's *Salome*, and, even more, Patzah's Herod, are famous assumptions of the parts. The quality of Goltz's voice is not always pleasant, but she can rise thrillingly to every climax and her conception of the part comes near to Welitsch at her best. Patzah's Herod shows once and for all the true meaning of the phrase actor-singer—it is a conception worthy of the closest study. Hans Braun makes a noble figure of Jokanaan, even though not sufficiently denunciatory, and Margaret Kenney is a suitably vicious Herodias. All the other parts in the long cast are well done, but it is the superlative playing of the orchestra under Krauss that is the outstanding feature of this issue. I wish the engineers had let us hear more of it during the singing: why this passion for vocal loudness at the expense of orchestral sound? Still, this is very good and realistic recording (Decca LXT2863-4).

Philips have also recorded the opera with Rudolf Moralt in charge of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The recording is excellent, and the issue has many good features, but its success is handicapped by a thin-voiced *Salome* (Wallurga Wegner) and less distinguished orchestral playing. It should, however, be heard (Philips ABL3003-4).

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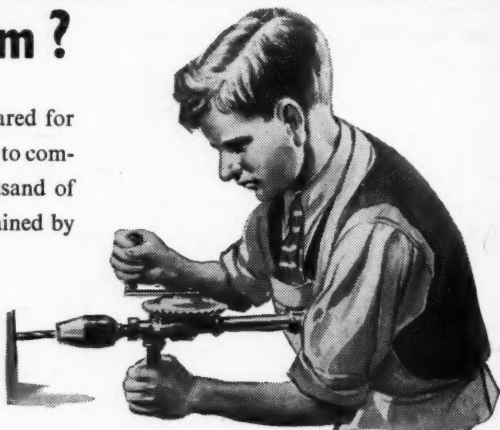
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